

No. 1151

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21, 1927

Price 8 Cents

FAME & FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

THE LURE OF GOLD; OR, THE TREASURE OF COFFIN ROCK.

By A SELF-MADE MAN

AND OTHER STORIES



"Get off this spar, d'ye hear?" cried Mark Redriff, seizing Jack by the throat and raising his clenched fist to strike the boy. "I won't have you on it." "Help! Help!" gurgled the lad. The other boy answered his cry

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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The Lure of Gold

OR, THE TREASURE OF COFFIN ROCK

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.—The Lure of Gold.

"You young rascal! I'll learn you not to upset my licker!" roared Mark Redriff, the ruffianly mate of the brig Cormorant, grabbing a youth of sixteen who had accidentally jostled his arm as he was in the act of swallowing a glass of whisky at the bar of a Pacific Street grogery. "I'll knock the daylights out of you."

As the half-drunken mate raised his hairy fist to carry out his purpose, another boy, a stalwart, good-looking chap of eighteen years, who had just entered the saloon with an envelope in his hand, sprang forward and seized his uplifted arm.

"Hold on there!" he cried. "What are you trying to do? Why don't you tackle someone your own size?"

Redriff swung around and glared at the newcomer.

"Blame you! What d'ye mean by buttin' in?" he roared, releasing his intended victim and aiming a vicious blow at the other lad.

The boy easily dodged his fist, and seeing that the mate was a dangerous customer, backed away. Redriff, whose anger was now fully aroused and directed against the young chap with the note, followed him up with fierce imprecations and threats.

"I'll pickle you for puttin' in your oar, you young seacock!" he hissed.

He dashed at the boy with both arms extended to seize him, but the object of his rage nimbly put a table between them. With a howl of fury the mate chased him around the table, but the active lad managed to keep just out of his reach.

"I'll have you in a minute, and then I'll wring your neck," gritted Redriff, making a fresh attempt to capture the boy.

He failed again and stopped for breath, leaning heavily on the table, with his blazing eyes upon the lad, whose cheerful look exasperated him the more. The rumpus had attracted the attention of all the habitues of the place, who began to encourage both the mate and the youth to keep it up. To spur the former on several of the onlookers jeered his impotent efforts to reach the boy.

Their words maddened Redriff, and seeming to realize his inability to get at the youth by follow-

ing him in a circle, he made a sudden spring across the table, thinking to nab him in that way. As the boy drew back out of his reach, the table toppled under his weight and mate and table went down on the floor with a crash that shook the room.

That ended the contest between the two, for Redriff's head came in contact with the edge of a heavy metallic spittoon, and what with the shock of the blow, and the fumes of bad whisky which rushed to his head, the mate rolled over on the floor unconscious.

"Hurrah for the youngster!" yelled a tarry-looking sailor, pounding the table at which he sat drinking with a companion.

"Come and have a drink, young feller," cried another mariner, standing near by, grabbing the boy by the arm and dragging him up to the bar.

"You'll have to excuse me. I don't drink," objected the lad.

"Then this here is a good time for you to learn," persisted the seaman, calling to the barkeeper to furnish them with two drinks.

"No, I don't want to learn," answered the lad, trying to release his arm.

"You've got to drink with me," insisted the sailor. "You served out that there grampus in ship-shape style, and you and me's going to celebrate the occasion."

"When I say I won't drink, I won't, and that's all there is to it," replied the boy, resolutely.

"When Bill Blaine, that's me, says you've got to drink, you've got to, d'ye understand?"

"No, I don't understand, and you can't make me."

The boy snatched his arm out of the other's grasp and backed off.

The man was about to resent his action when the sailor who had suggested the cheer interfered.

"Hold hard, Bill Blaine," he said. "If the boy don't want to drink you ain't got no right to make him. You see what he done to the mate. Better haul in your hawser or he might give you a run for your money, too. Fair play is a jewel, so just you let him alone."

A scrap between the two sailors seemed imminent, for Blaine showed an ugly streak, but it was averted by the barkeeper producing a club

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and threatening to lay it over the head of the first man who raised a further rumpus. Blaine then subsided and drew off to the table where he had been drinking by himself.

"Well, my lad," said the other sailor, "what brought you in here?"

"I came here with a note."

"Who for?"

"A man named Mark Redriff, mate of the brig Cormorant."

The sailor grinned broadly.

"Then you'll have to wait till he comes to his senses."

"What do you mean?" asked the boy.

"Why, Redriff is the man who tried to down you. That's him on the floor."

"It is?" exclaimed the surprised lad.

"Aye, aye. That's Mark Redriff. How came you to fetch that there note to him?"

"A gentleman, a stranger to me, gave me two bits to deliver it."

"A gentleman, eh? What's your name, sonny?"

"Jack Granville."

"You can leave it with the barkeeper to give to the mate when he comes to his senses. It might not be healthy for you to run up ag'in Redriff after what's happened."

"I was told that it's important, and that I must give it to nobody but Mark Redriff himself," replied Jack.

"And you mean to do that, eh?"

"I do. I always follow orders."

"You've got good nerve."

"I guess I can take care of myself," replied the boy, coolly.

"You don't know the mate."

"I don't want to know him."

"If you don't then you'd better skip before he sets his weather eye on you. Give me the note and I'll see that he gets it. I belong to his brig."

"Much obliged to you, Mr.—"

"Don't mister me. My name is Ben Brown. everybody calls me Ben."

"Well, I'm much obliged to you, Ben Brown, but I'm going to hand that note to Redriff myself, for my instructions were positive, and I don't care to go back on them."

"All right, my hearty. Do as you please, but if the mate wipes the floor with you don't say that I didn't warn you."

"I don't blame you, Ben Brown," said Jack, seating himself at the nearest table.

The sailor returned to his own table.

Everybody in the saloon had heard the conversation between them and they regarded the boy with not a little curiosity.

He was a bright, intelligent and well-dressed boy, and looked out of place in the dive, for that is what the place was, though it was on a level with the street.

That section of Pacific Street below Kearney, in the city of San Francisco, was, at the period of our story, known as a rather shy neighborhood. The buildings on both sides of the way were mostly two and three-story frame structures, of old-time vintage, that is, they had been put up many years since, and looked much the worse for wear. The ground floors were occupied as stores and saloons—the stores being peopled by a low grade of Hebrews and others. Second-hand clothes were the chief staple to be found there, and the customers were largely sailors. Jack

Granville had barely seated himself when the seedy looking boy, the cause of all the commotion, who had remained in the background, a silent spectator of the proceedings, edged forward to the table.

"I'm much obliged to you for saving me from a licking," he said to Jack, in a grateful tone.

Granville looked at him from head to foot and then replied:

"You're welcome."

"I hope you won't get into more trouble on my account," continued the lad, who seemed disposed to court Jack's acquaintance.

"Don't worry. I can look out for myself. I'm not afraid of that brute."

"I wish I had your nerve," said the boy, sidling into a chair. Jack smiled.

"It's just my way, that's all. Who are you?"

My name is Joe Anderson."

"You don't look prosperous."

"I ain't got a cent."

"I'm not flush, myself. If I was I wouldn't have been so anxious to come here on the errand that brought me."

The other boy looked surprised.

"You look as if you were well fixed," he said.

"Looks don't always count."

"You've got good clothes on, and seem to be a gent."

"That's all right, but I'm in hard luck."

"How is that?"

"I've run away from home."

"You have?" cried Joe. "What for?"

"Reasons."

"Don't you mean to go back?"

"Not at present."

"I wish I had a home, I wouldn't run away from it."

"Are you out on the world?" asked Jack, growing interested in his new companion.

"Yes."

"How do you live?"

"Any way I can."

"Can't you pick up a steady job?"

"Nobody wants me. I guess I don't look good enough to be hired."

"You might get work on a fruit farm up country."

"Don't care about working on a farm. I'm going to sea the first chance I get."

"You are? I was thinking of doing the same."

"No, is that so?" said Anderson, surprised. "I should think you could do better than turn sailor. You don't look as if you were cut out for one."

"Maybe not; but I've got an object in view."

"What is it?"

Jack looked at the shabby boy reflectively.

"Say, I don't know how it is, but I rather like you."

"I like you, too. I'd like to go to sea with you."

"I think I can trust you."

"You can. I won't say a word about anything you tell me," said Joe, eagerly.

"Then listen. I live in Oakland in a nice house."

"I knew you were a gent."

"I've got a step-father, and he and I don't pull together."

"Does he lick you?"

"I guess not. He tried it on me once and came out second best," replied Jack grimly. "He does other things that I don't like, and as my mother won't stand up for me, I decided to leave home as

soon as I got ready. Some time ago I got acquainted with the mate of a ship who came to stop over with his married sister in Oakland. He told me lots of stories about the sea and foreign parts. I was greatly interested in all he said; but what interested me most was an island he told me about in the South Pacific."

"An island!" said Joe.

"Yes. On one side of this island is a huge stonet shaped just like a coffin. It's called Coffin Rock."

"That so?"

"It isn't that alone that I'm interested in, but the fact that hidden somewhere in the base of that rock is a treasure of gold."

"You don't say!" cried Joe, listening with open mouth.

"The mate said that some day when he had made enough money to hire a vessel he meant to hunt up that island and try and find the gold."

"I should think he would."

"I'd like to find that island myself."

"How could you?"

"If I went to sea I might find some way of getting there."

"You'd be rich if you found the gold."

"Of course I would. I'd be independent of my stepfather, and that's what I'm after. I could have anything that I wanted if I got hold of that treasure."

"I should say so. I'd like to find it with you," said Joe, eagerly.

"If we go to sea together that might happen. You'd get a share of the gold, and you could have anything you wanted, too."

"I wish I had a square meal now. I haven't ate anything since last night, and then I only had a plate of doughnuts and coffee; but they did taste good," and Joe's mouth watered at the recollection of the cheap feast.

"When I deliver the note to Mark Redriff I'll treat you to dinner."

"Will you? You're a brick."

At that moment the mate moved and sat up.

No one in the place had bothered himself with Redriff, as his reputation was well known, that is why he had been suffered to lie where he had fallen until he came to of his own accord.

When he sat up his bloodshot eyes rested on the two boys.

Jack immediately got up and moved around to the other side of the table prepared for squalls.

He expected that the man would go for him at once.

Nothing like that happened.

The mate got on his feet and paid no further attention to him. He seemed to have forgotten what had occurred. As he started unsteadily for the door, Jack called to him.

"Mr Redriff."

"Hey!" cried the mate stepping and looking around.

"Here's a letter for you," said the boy, holding it out to him.

The mate came back and took it.

Then he looked hard at Jack.

"Where have I seen you before?" he said.

"I guess you never saw me before I came in here," replied the boy.

"Yes, I have," said the mate, thickly, grabbing the table to support himself. "Who gave you this?"

"A well-dressed man with a black mustache, and a silk hat."

"I know him. You mean Mr. Edwards. I'm obliged to you."

He tore open the note and tried to read it, but the effort was a failure.

Finally he gave the job up and put the letter in his pocket.

At least he thought he did, but it dropped on the floor. Then he walked out of the saloon, and the row that those in the place had expected between him and Jack, did not materialize.

CHAPTER II.—Jack's Quixotic Scheme.

"Well, let's go and eat, Joe," said Jack, after the mate left the saloon.

The seedy youth got up with alacrity.

As the former started for the door he saw the note that Redriff had dropped.

Stooping he picked it up.

"I wonder if he threw it away, or let it fall by mistake?" thought Jack. "The man who gave it to me to deliver placed so much importance on it that it doesn't seem as if Redriff would drop it intentionally around here where anybody might pick it up and read it. I guess I'll take charge of it," he added, putting it in his pocket.

"Well, mate, I see you got off easy," said Ben Brown, as the boys passed the table at which he was sitting.

"Yes," replied Jack. "He must have forgotten all about the scrap we had."

"That's right," nodded the sailor; "otherwise you'd have heard from him."

"Well, good-by, Brown. Maybe I'll see you again some time."

"Good-by, my hearty, and good luck to you," replied the sailor.

Neither expected to see each other again, as Ben knew that the brig Cormorant was to sail some time next day, while Jack did not expect to go near the saloon again.

The boys went to a small chop-house on the ground floor of the old government building on Sansome Street, not far away.

It was a cheap joint where they could get all they wanted to eat for a quarter.

They ordered steak, fried potatoes, coffee and pudding, and the way Joe Anderson piled into the provender was a caution.

"Suppose we go down to the water front and look at the vessels" suggested Jack, after they had finished their meal.

"I'm willing. I ain't got no place else to go," replied Joe.

They walked straight down Washington Street until they came to the water front.

It was about two o'clock and a fine, sunshiny afternoon. They saw vessels of every description at the different wharves, and they went around inspecting the larger ones, wondering whence they had come and where they were going when they had taken their cargoes on board.

Sometimes Jack made inquiries of some long-shoreman sunning himself against a spile-head, and received a variety of information.

They were standing at the end of Greenwich Dock, at the foot of Battery Street, looking out

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toward Alcatraz Island and the half dozen craft lying in the stream, when Jack received a hearty slap on the back and a familiar voice exclaimed:

"Well, my hearty, here we are ag'in."

Jack turned around and confronted Ben Brown and Bill Blaine.

"I didn't expect to see you soon again," replied the boy, looking at Brown who had addressed him.

"Nor did I expect to see you, sonny," replied the sailor, hitching up his trousers and spitting into the water.

"What vessel is that yonder? The one with the two masts?"

"That there hooker is the Cormorant, and Bill and me is jest goin' off to her."

"You belong to her, do you?"

"That's what we do, sonny."

"And Mark Redriff, the man I had the scrap with, is mate of her?"

"Chief mate, my hearty."

"I don't think I'd care to sail with such an officer."

"I've seen wuss in my time."

"Is she going to sea soon?"

"To-morrer afternoon with the flood, I reckon."

"Where is she bound?"

"Sydney."

"I suppose you've been in the South Pacific many times?"

"I reckon I have, sonny."

"Ever hear of an island that had a coffin-shaped rock on it?"

"A coffin-shaped rock! I'll allow there's a good many islands that have rocks shaped somethin' like a coffin."

"This is a big rock that stands right out of the water at one end of the island, and looks exactly like a big coffin."

"Who told you about such a rock, sonny?"

"The mate of the ship Golden Magnet, which sailed for China a couple of weeks ago. The island that has this rock is somewhere in the South Pacific."

"I dunno as I ever heard about that partic'lar one, but I s'pose it's there if the mate of the Magnet seen it."

"He didn't see it, but he knows all about it. I'd like to go there, and I mean to if I can get the chance."

"What do you want to go there for, sonny?" asked the sailor, eyeing him curiously.

"Oh, just to see the rock," replied the boy, evasively.

"D'y'e mean to say you'd travel a couple of thousand miles maybe across the briny jest to see a rock that looked like a coffin?"

"I would."

The sailor regarded Jack much as he would some new species of animal.

"I guess he's got some other reason for wantin' to go to Coffin Rock," put in Bill Blaine, in a significant tone. "I've heard tell that a South Pacific pirate buried a chest of gold at the base of that rock fifty year or more ago, but nobody who looked for it ever found it."

"You don't say, Bill," cried Brown. "This is the first time I've heard of such a thing. Who told you there's a chest of gold at a place called Coffin Rock in the South Pacific?"

"I couldn't say who told me. I've heard about it several times."

"Is it the chest of gold you're after, sonny?" grinned Brown.

"I didn't say anything about a chest of gold," answered the boy.

"I dunno as you did, but that's what you were thinkin' of, wasn't it?"

"I'll admit that the mate of the Golden Magnet did say something about gold being somewhere on that island," said Jack.

"If the chest of gold is there it's around Coffin Rock," put in Blaine.

"Well, sonny, I guess there ain't much chance of you goin' there to look at the rock and hunt for the chest. Your parents ain't likely to let you go to sea."

Jack made no reply, and in a few minutes Brown bade him good-by, and he and Blaine turned on their heels and went to the head of the dock, where they found the brig's boat waiting for Mark Redriff and the members of the crew who were ashore.

"You heard what that sailor said about the chest of gold being buried at the base of Coffin Rock by a pirate of the South Pacific, didn't you?" Jack said to his new friend, Joe.

"Yes."

"That's the same story the mate of the Golden Magnet told me, so there must surely be some truth in it."

"The sailor said it was buried there over fifty years ago. Maybe somebody has found it long before this."

"No, I don't believe it's been found. The sailor said nobody had found it."

"How would he know whether it was found or not?"

"The mate of the Golden Magnet said several persons had hunted for the gold but couldn't find it. He had an idea that he'd have better luck if he went to the island. At any rate he told me where he thought it was, and made me promise not to tell anybody what he told me, though, he said nobody could find the island unless they knew where to look for it. I asked him if the island had a name, and he said it had, but he wouldn't tell me what the name was. He said that was his secret."

"If you don't know the name of the island how could you ever reach it even if you did go to sea? Besides, if you and me did sail in some vessel, intending to get to that island somehow, the captain of the ship wouldn't hunt it up and land us there," said Joe.

"Of course he wouldn't, even if he knew the island and it lay in his road."

"Then how do you ever expect to go there?"

"In the first place, if I went to Australia, I'd make inquiries of every sailor I met in the port we stopped at for information about the island that had a coffin rock on it. I'd be sure to find some sailor who knew the place and could give me an idea where it is situated. Once I found that out, I'd try to get to some inhabited island near it where I'd endeavor to interest the owner of a small vessel to go there with me to hunt for the gold. If we found it we could divide it between all who were connected with the expedition. If you were with me you'd get a share as well as the others."

Jack was a level-headed youth, but his plan for securing the alleged treasure of Coffin Rock was

quixotic in the extreme, and sadly lacking in common sense.

The lure of gold had taken such possession of his imagination that it blinded his judgment.

He really believed that he would find it an easy matter to discover the identity of the island; and that it would be equally easy to persuade the owner of some small craft to go to the place with him and hunt for the treasure that he was firmly convinced was hidden in some part of the coffin rock.

If he had tried to carry his plan out as he had outlined it to Joe, he never would have reached the goal of his expectations.

He and Joe, however, were destined to reach the island of Coffin Rock through circumstances over which they had no control, which shows that accident, as well as luck, plays an important part in the lives of every one of us.

CHAPTER III.—Shipped to Sea.

Jack and Joe walked over the Meiggs' Wharf, and hung around the saloon where quite a museum of marine curiosities were on exhibition to attract custom to the bar.

Then they turned up Stockton Street till they reached Washington Street, down which they strolled till they came to the Plaza.

By that time it was getting dark.

"Where do you hang out of nights, Joe?" asked Jack.

"No place in particular. I found a pretty good crib last night at the rear of an alley on Pacific Street, and I'm going there again to-night."

"I'll go with you, if there's room for two," said Jack.

"You!" cried Joe, in surprise. "It ain't no place for a gent like you."

"When a gent like me, as you term me, hasn't got the price of a lodging he has to put up with the best that fortune provides," replied Jack, cheerfully.

"What, haven't you any money?"

"I've got just enough to pay for supper and breakfast for us both, and I'd sooner give the money to a restaurant keeper than hand over half for lodgings if I can find a free bunk anywhere."

"There ain't no call for you to feed me if you're so short," said Joe, generously. "I can go without supper. It won't be the first, nor the second, time I've done so."

"No, you shan't go without supper. We're going to eat right away."

"What'll you do to-morrow?"

"Oh, let to-morrow look after itself. I'll look up a job to-morrow to carry us over till we find a chance to ship aboard some vessel bound for the South Seas."

"Then you really mean to go to sea?"

"I do. I'm going to find that treasure if it can be found."

"Do you think we will both find the chance to go in the same vessel?"

"We'll go together or we won't go at all, Joe."

"You're a real brick, Jack. I was lucky to meet you."

"Here's a chop-house. Let's go in."

They entered a small eating-house on the lower

end of Kearney Street, and ordered a lay-out of ham and eggs and coffee.

They ate with a fine appetite, and both felt better when they got out on the sidewalk again.

"I suppose we might as well stroll around town till we feel like turning into that crib on Pacific Street you spoke about, Joe," said Jack.

"I'm willing to do anything you say, Jack," responded the shabby youth.

"Come on, then. We'll walk toward Market Street and amuse ourselves looking in at the store windows."

When they reached Market Street they crossed to the other side of Kearney Street and returned in the direction they came.

Finally they reached the neighborhood of the Bella Union Theater, a flashy temple of amusement and one of the oldest in San Francisco.

Next door to it was an auction house known as "Cheap John's."

It was ablaze with light and crowded with people on the lookout for bargains in the notion and house-furnishing lines.

Jack and Joe pushed their way in out of curiosity. As they took their stand under a flaring gas jet, Jack happened to put his hand in his pocket and he pulled out the envelope dropped by the mate of the brig Cormorant.

"See this?" he said showing it to Joe.

"Sure I do," replied his companion.

"This is the note I carried to Mark Redriff in the Pacific Street saloon, where I made your acquaintance."

"It is!" exclaimed Joe. "Why, I saw you give him the note you brought."

"I know I gave it to him, and he tore it open and tried to read it, but without much success."

"Then how do you happen to have it?"

"He dropped it on the floor and went away without it. When we started to leave I saw it lying where it fell, picked it up and put it in my pocket."

"What are you going to do with it?"

"My idea was to get it to him in some way, but I don't quite see how I can do it. The Cormorant is in the stream, ready to sail to-morrow, and I suppose the mate is aboard of her long before this. I might manage to send it to him to-morrow somehow, if I could meet Ben Brown."

"Maybe it isn't worth sending to him. If he dropped it after reading it——"

"I don't believe he read it. He was half drunk and not able to do it."

"Why don't you read it and see if it amounts to anything?"

"I haven't any right to read another person's letter."

"What's the odds? Nobody will know. If it's important you can persuade some boatman to carry it to the brig in the morning; if it isn't you needn't bother about it," said Joe.

After some hesitation Jack took out the enclosure and began to read it.

He hadn't read more than three lines before he uttered an exclamation.

"What's the matter?" asked Joe.

"What do you think?" cried Jack, in some excitement. "It's about the treasure of Coffin Rock."

"You don't mean it!" ejaculated Joe, in astonishment.

"The writer, who signs himself Edwards, says that he will go to Sydney by a steamer that'll land

him there about the time the Cormorant arrives. He will then fit out a schooner and with Redriff for master, and a crew of his selection, they will sail for Coffin Rock island and make a big effort to find the treasure. If they discover it they will divide it equally between them, after deducting all the expenses of the expedition. If they fail to find it he will stand all the loss himself. What a snap for the mate!"

"It's a good thing you got hold of that note," said Joe.

"How is it going to benefit me any?"

"You say you don't think the mate was able to read it."

"I am pretty sure that he didn't read it."

"All you've got to do is to destroy it and then you'll be sure he won't read it."

"Why should I do that?"

"Why should you? If those men go hunting for the treasure they may find it and then you and me will be dished out of the chance. If the mate doesn't know that the writer of the note is going to meet him in Sydney he won't be on the lookout for him and so the scheme will fall through."

"That's where you're wrong, Joe. This man Edwards will probably reach Sydney ahead of the brig, and will watch for her arrival. Then he is bound to call on Redriff, and the plan will go through anyway, see?"

Joe saw the point and looked glum.

"I guess we might as well give up all idea of the treasure ourselves."

"Why should we? To-morrow we'll try and find a chance to ship on some craft bound for Sydney, or some other Australian port. If we're lucky we may get to Australia before the Cormorant. Once there we'll stand a good chance of interesting some person in the hunt for the treasure. I'll keep this letter, for it will be the best evidence I can show that the gold is believed to be at Coffin Rock, and that this man Edwards intends to fit out a vessel to search for it."

"That's so," said Joe, eagerly.

The boys were so enthused over Jack's plan that they lost all interest in the auction sale they had stepped in to look at, and left "Cheap John's" in order to talk it over without interruption.

They walked over the Plaza, half a block away, sat down on a bench and began to figure out their line of action for the next morning.

Then Jack planned what they should do on reaching an Australian port.

Neither doubted that a man would easily be found to take an interest in the treasure hunt, since it would be money in his pocket if the gold was discovered.

Having settled that thing to their satisfaction, they built castles in the air about the treasure, forgetting that one should never count his chickens before they are hatched.

It was after eleven when they left the Plaza and started for the crib in Pacific Street, where they expected to roost that night.

Joe piloted the way into the alley, which was pitch dark.

In a few minutes they came to the door of a small private stable.

Here a huckster of vegetables kept his horse and ricketty wagon.

The door was secured by a padlock, but that didn't bother Joe.

He had no use for the door, for he had discovered a way of entering the stable by removing a couple of loose boards.

As he fumbled around to find the place, a match suddenly flared up close by and the boys were startled to see three rough-looking men standing close to them.

"Well, what are you chaps doin' in here?" demanded the man with the match.

"Looking for a place to sleep," answered Joe, not knowing what else to say.

"Trying to get into the stable, eh?" he said, flashing a second match and looking the boys over. "Ain't yer got no home?"

"No," replied Joe. "If we had we wouldn't be here."

"Well, you're jest the chaps we want."

"What for? We don't want nothing to do with you."

"How would you like to go to sea?"

Joe was about to say "First rate, provided the vessel was bound for Australia," but not liking the looks of the men, he replied: "we don't want to go to sea."

"Yer don't, eh? It's the best place for tramps like you, so we'll take the liberty of sendin' yer there whether yer like it or not."

Thereupon the three fellows pounced on the boys.

Joe was an easy victim, but Jack put up a stiff fight in the dark against the men until a blow stretched him bleeding and unconscious on the ground.

A cloth was clapped against Joe's mouth and nose and he became unconscious, also,

A door, leading into one of the buildings adjoining the alley, was opened and the two senseless lads were taken into a small room at the back of a saloon.

They were propped up in a couple of chairs, and then the man who had done the talking walked into the bar-room.

Two hours later the boys were pushed up the side of a weather-beaten vessel in the stream, which looked as if she was on the eve of departure from port.

The lads were inspected by the second mate, who came on deck to meet the party from the shore.

"I guess they'll do as we can't wait for anything better. I'll bring you an order from the captain on the owners for the price."

The mate turned on his heel and went into the cabin. He returned in a short time with a slip of paper which he handed to the man who had brought the boys aboard.

The fellow picked up the lantern which stood on the deck, looked at the note, and then with a grunt of satisfaction put the paper in his pocket.

Wishing the mate good-night and a prosperous voyage he went over the side, stepped into the Whitehall boat and was immediately rowed shoreward. The mate called a couple of sailors and ordered them to carry the lads into the forecastle and dump them into a couple of spare bunks.

Hardly had this been done when the tug came alongside and made fast.

The vessel was soon under way for the "Heads."

She reached the bar at flood tide, passing over, and then the tug was cast loose.

There was a fair breeze blowing and all plain sail was set.

With her nose pointed W. S. W. she started off on the long voyage which was before her.

Down in the forecastle the two boys lay in their bunks like logs, unconscious of the fact that they had been shipped to sea on the brig Cormorant of which Mark Redriff, who was sleeping off his jag in his stateroom, was chief mate.

CHAPTER IV.—Coffin Rock.

The sun was well up and the brig was bowling along under a smacking breeze, with the Farallone Islands miles astern, when Jack Granville came to his senses.

He sat up in the bunk and looked around him in astonishment.

He had never been in the forecastle of a vessel before, and his situation was decidedly new.

"Where in thunder am I?" he asked himself, as he looked around at the bunks, a part of them filled with sleeping forms, and then at the swinging slush-lamp and the scuttle opening through which came the light of day.

It did not take him many moments to read the answer in the rise and fall, and rolling motion of the place he was in.

"Why I'm aboard a ship!" he exclaimed in astonishment.

"How came I here?"

Then he remembered the encounter he and Joe had with the three rough men in the dark alley off Pacific Street.

As his eyes rested on the next bunk he saw his companion lying there apparently asleep.

"Gracious! We've both been shipped to sea," he cried. "Suppose this vessel is bound around the Horn, or to China, or the East Indies, that treasure scheme of mine will be knocked into a cocked-hat; but if she should be headed for Australia, why then Joe and I will be all right."

At that moment the sailor in the bunk opposite woke up, threw out his legs and was about to get up when his gaze encountered the surprised face of Jack.

"Ben Brown!" ejaculated the boy. "Is that really you?"

The sailor stared at him for several moments without speaking and then gave utterance to a low whistle.

"Why it's never you, shipmate, is it?" he said.

"Yes, it's me, Jack Granville."

"Well, shiver me, if here isn't a surprise. When did you come aboard?"

"Last night. But I didn't come, I was brought."

"Brought! What d'ye mean by that?"

Jack explained the cause of his presence on board in a few words, and pointed at his friend Joe in the next bunk.

"Shanghaied, eh?" said the sailor. "Who'd 'a' thought of it?"

The presence of Ben Brown showed Jack that he and Joe had been put aboard the brig Cormorant; and although it was something of a shock for him to find himself in the same vessel with Mark Redriff, still it was a satisfaction to know that the craft was bound for Sydney, and not to any of a dozen other ports that would have taken him far away from the object he had in view.

"So I'm on board the Cormorant?" he said.
"I reckon you ain't nowhere else," replied Ben.

"Bound for Sydney?"

"That's right, my hearty."

"And Mark Redriff is chief mate?"

"That's true as Gospel."

"I suppose there is no use kicking for we seem to be at sea?"

"No use at all, shipmate. You'll have to make the best of it, and turn to and learn the ropes."

"Well, as long as we're bound for Australia, I don't care."

"Want to go there, do you?"

"Yes."

"Maybe we'll pass near that Coffin Rock you want to see," grinned Ben.

"I wish we would," said Jack, eagerly.

"Like to go ashore there, eh, and dig for that there gold that you think is somewhere about the rock?" chuckled the sailor.

"Not much chance of that, I guess," replied Jack.

"I should say not, sonny. If there ever was any gold there, as Bill Blaine says, it was buried by some pirate, it's been found long ago, or there'd be lots of people lookin' for it."

"I don't believe it's been found. I am sure it's there yet."

"How can you be sure of it? What do you know about it anyway? Only what that there mate of the Magnet told you, and you said he never seen the island."

"He seems to know a whole lot about it. He said when he made money enough to charter a vessel he was going to hunt for it."

"Then he's a blamed fool, that's all I've got to say."

"Why is he? If he found the gold it would make him rich."

"Of course it would—if he found it; but there's as much chance of his findin' it as you have to walk back to 'Frisco at this moment."

At that moment eight bells sounded on the ship's bell, and the sound awakened every member of the watch below, and they began to turn out.

It was eight o'clock and the forenoon watch had begun.

"I reckon someone will be after you chaps pretty soon," said Ben, as he put on his shoes. "If I was you I'd hustle on deck and get your breakfast at the galley afore the mate takes you in hand."

Thus speaking the sailor followed his companions up the short ladder and disappeared.

Jack thought his advice good and hopped off his bunk.

As he went over to arouse Joe, that lad suddenly sat up and looked around him in some astonishment.

"Why, hello, Jack!" he said. "Where are we, aboard some vessel?"

"Yes, we're on board of the Cormorant, bound for Sydney," replied Jack.

"We are?" exclaimed Joe, utterly amazed at the revelation.

"We are for fair," replied Jack.

"Are you sure of it?"

"Positive. I was just talking to Ben Brown. That's his bunk across there."

"If that don't beat all. Those three men who

attacked us in the alley must have brought us aboard. After they knocked you out one of them put a rag over my face, and I don't remember anything else till I woke up and found myself here."

"Let's go on deck and see if we can get anything to eat. I'm feeling hungry."

"So am I," said Joe.

Jack ran up the ladder, followed by his companion. They saw a group of sailors around a small deck-house, which, as it had a small chimney projecting through the roof, from which smoke was issuing, Jack judged was the galley. The boys approached the open door of the house with some diffidence. The foremast hands, who were lounging around the entrance eating from tin pannikins and drinking hot coffee out of tin cups, eyed them curiously. As they came up Ben Brown came out of the galley with his breakfast in his two hands.

"Hello, my hearties!" he cried cheerily. "Walk right in and ask the doctor to serve you. He'll lend you a couple of cups and pans till you're served out ship-shape from the brig's slop-chest."

"Why, keel-haul me if these lubbers aren't the two chaps we met on Green'ich Dock, Ben," said Bill Blaine, recognizing the boys. "So you chaps have shipped aboard this hooker, have ye?"

"No, they didn't ship," replied Brown. "They were shanghaied last night."

"The deuce they were!" grinned Blaine.

One or two of the sailors regarded the boys with sympathy, but the others seemed to be indifferent as to the fate that had overtaken them.

"Cookie," cried Ben, "here's a couple of green hands who want their grub."

The cook, generally alluded to as the "doctor," stuck his head out at the door and scanned the boys curiously. He was a native of the Sandwich Islands, and his skin was beautifully brown and shiny. Beckoning the lads inside he supplied them with breakfast, and the utensils necessary to eat it out of. During their meal the boys were "joshed" quite a bit by the sailors, but they took the witticisms passed at their expense good-naturedly, and on the whole made a favorable impression on their new associates. After breakfast they were ordered aft by the captain, who, after a critical survey of their faces and persons, turned them over to the chief mate to be fitted out. Mark Redriff had at first regarded their appearance on board in some surprise, for he recognized them as the boys he had met in the Pacific Street saloon.

Then a look of satisfaction came upon his features, for he now recollects the scrap he had with Jack Granville over the seedy lad, and he saw his opportunity to get square several times over with the boy. He said nothing to them before the skipper. There was lots of time ahead during the long voyage to make the two lads toe the mark in a way they would remember all their lives. He took them down and fitted them out to a sailor's kit from the brig's chest, and then dismissed them after telling Jack, with a malicious grin, that he would be in his watch which was now on duty, while Joe would be a member of the second mate's watch, which was off till noon.

We will not follow the two boys through their rough apprenticeship aboard the brig during the next two months or so, during which time the Cormorant worked her way well down into the South

Pacific. It is enough to say, that they had to step lively in learning the ropes, and many a hard knock both received from the two mates. Of the two, Jack had by far the worst time of it, for Mark Redriff made a dead seta at him, and led him a dog's life of it.

Jack, who had been brought up in a good home, and had had everything he wanted until his real father died and a step-father took his place at the head of the house, often wished himself back home in Oakland, in spite of the great desire he cherished to reach Coffin Rock and hunt for the pirate's hidden treasure.

Redriff seldom lost a chance to make life miserable for him, and the boy had to grin and bear it, for he dared not offer the least resistance to the tyranny of the chief officer. One afternoon, when the brig was in latitude 20 south, about midway between the Fiji and the Friendly islands, she ran into a tremendous gale. She was blown a considerable distance out of her course, and as the vessel was old things looked pretty serious as the hours sped by and the storm showed no indication of letting up. She took in a good bit of water, and all hands had to take turns at the pumps. When the crew was well-nigh exhausted by continuous labor the carpenter reported to the skipper that the brig must have sprung a plank for the water was now gaining rapidly on the men. This was dispiriting intelligence, and it looked as if the Cormorant was doomed, for the gale was at its height.

The crew was not informed of the critical state of things, since the captain knew they would abandon the pumps at once in despair, and clamor for the boats. The sea was running so high that it hardly seemed possible for the stoutest boat to ride the waves for any length of time in safety. Under such conditions it seemed as if the brig, and all hands, were bound for the port of missing ships. Morning broke under a pitiless sky, gray as a dead man's face. The rain and the surges swept the deck, while the wind blew like a million furies.

"It's all up with us, I fear, Joe," said Jack to his friend, as they clung desperately to a life-line stretched across the deck, resting from a recent spell at the pump. "I'll never see Oakland or my dear mother again. This is my punishment for running away on a wild-goose chase after a pirate's treasure."

"Yes," replied Joe, with a melancholy shake of his head, "this is our finish. We'll never see Coffin Rock."

Although the boys, in common with the crew, were not aware how critical the situation of the brig was, still they were so appalled by the awful gale, and the fact that the vessel was leaking steadily, that they lost all hope of ever reaching land again.

"We won't see a coffin of any kind. We shall just go down with the vessel and float around in the depths until the sharks get our dead bodies in the end."

"We won't feel 'em eating us, that's one satisfaction," replied Joe, dismally.

"But it's awful to think of drowning in mid-ocean."

"Yes; but I've heard tell that it's an easy death. It would be a whole lot worse if the brig had taken fire and we had to be roasted to death."

"We could take to the boats in that case."

"And be drowned anyhow if the sea was running as it is now. I heard Blaine say that no boat could live in this gale."

"If the worst comes to the worst I suppose we'll all have to chance it."

"A mighty small chance we'd have. It's just a toss up whether a chap goes down with the brig or in one of the boats."

Jack remained silent. He was sad and discouraged. Thoughts of his Oakland home ran through his brain, and it was as much as he could do to repress a sob as he realized how foolishly he had acted. No such feelings disturbed Joe Anderson. He was a waif on the stream of life and the past had little attraction for him. Suddenly amid the howling of the blast, and without the slightest warning, the brig crashed upon some obstruction that lay in her path, and she came to a stop. The shock was tremendous, and one of the masts went by the board, the spars crashing down on the deck, carrying ruin and destruction to vessel and crew. The waves rushed unrestrained across the brig's deck and swept the survivors overboard.

Jack found himself submerged in the boiling ocean and gave himself up for lost. But life is dear to us all at the supreme moment when we are hovering on the brink of eternity, and the boy made a desperate effort to swim out. He rose to the surface and his fingers came in contact with a large broken spar. He clutched at it as a drowning person will grab at a straw. Hardly knowing how he managed it he soon got astride of it. The unconscious form of a man swept by. Jack reached out and grabbed him by the hair. Then after great exertion he drew him across his ark of refuge and held on to him. Where was his friend Joe at that moment, he shuddered to think, and yet what chance of escape had he on that raging sea?

He was simply preserved for the time being, probably to suffer a more deliberate death later on, and yet even for that respite he felt grateful, for in every human heart is implanted that divine feeling—while there is life there is hope. Jack wiped the spray out of his eyes and looked around. He saw nothing but the raging billows, and yet, a short distance behind him was Joe Anderson, clinging to an empty water cask. As Jack turned his despairing eyes directly ahead, the sky lightened by degrees and a tall, dark object appeared a short distance in front of him. The boy gazed at it steadily, wondering what it was. As the light grew stronger, and the break up in the clouds indicated that the gale was abating, the object in question gradually took shape. And a fearful-looking shape it was under the circumstances. Nothing less than a huge, old-fashioned coffin, rising apparently right out of the boiling ocean. While Jack gazed on the seeming apparition with distended eyes, the man he had rescued from the sea at the moment of the wreck moved, and after a struggle threw one leg across the spar in front of the boy. Jack's attention was attracted to him, and as his eyes met those of the man, he recognized him as his late tyrant, the chief mate of the ill-fated brig.

"Mr. Redriff!" he exclaimed, huskily.

"You!" hissed the mate, swinging himself astride the spar.

"Yes, sir. You'd have been drowned if I hadn't pulled you out of the water."

Whether the mate believed him or not, gratitude was apparently not one of his traits.

"Get off the spar, d'ye hear?" cried Mark Redriff, seizing Jack by the throat and raising his clenched fist to strike the boy. "I won't have you on it."

"Help! Help!" grugled the lad.

The wind only answered his cry.

CHAPTER V.—Ashore on Coffin Rock Island.

In another moment the mate would have struck Jack and hurled him from the spar into theraging sea, but Fate interposed and saved the boy. The spar rose on the summit of a huge billow, which rushed it forward at great speed and flung it upon the sandy shore of a lone island. Redriff's grip on Jack's throat was shaken off, and boy and man went rolling over like a pair of animated pebbles until they were fetched up beyond the line of the surf. Both lay a while, unmindful of the other, gasping for breath. While in this state another billow seized Joe Anderson and the cask and fired them ashore close by. Jack was the first to recover from the shock of landing. He sat up, greatly astonished to realize that he was on land once more. His surprise was complete when his gaze encountered Joe scrambling on his legs.

"Joe!" he cried, joyfully. "Is it possible you are saved, too?"

"Sure as you live, I am," replied his friend, after spitting out a mouthful of wet sand.

"How did you come ashore?"

"On an empty cask. You came by that spar, I guess," was the answer.

"I did—I and Mark Redriff."

"Mark Redriff!" cried Joe. "Is that chap yonder the chief mate?"

"Yes. I saved his life when the brig was wrecked, and he was so grateful to me that he tried to throw me off the spar into the sea."

"You don't mean it?" said Joe.

"I do mean it," and he told Joe the way the mate had acted toward him the moment he recovered his senses. "If I hadn't pulled him out of the water, and then helped him on the spar, he would have been lost."

"Too bad you took the trouble to save him. He's been your enemy right along."

"I know he has, but I'm not sorry I saved him. I did not know him at the time, yet had I recognized him I would have acted just the same."

"Does he know that you saved his life?"

"I told him, and his reply was for me to get off the spar, as he wouldn't have me on it. The landing of the spar on the beach here saved me from his anger, and now I no longer fear him," said Jack.

"We have landed on some island."

"That's evident."

"I hope it's inhabited for I'm nearly dead for the want of something to eat."

"We'll find out pretty soon whether it is or not."

"Goodness!" gasped Joe. "Look over there," and he pointed his finger to a spot in the midst of the water, but close in shore.

Jack looked and gasped, too.

"Why, it's a rock shaped like a coffin," he said.

THE LURE OF GOLD

"Ugh! It gives me the shivers," said Joe.

"Can it be possible that we have come ashore on the very island we wanted to reach?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that yonder Coffin Rock may be the one where the pirate's treasure is hidden."

Joe gave a shout and turned a handspring on the sand to express his jubilant feelings.

"If that's so," he said, "we're in great luck."

"I hope so," replied Jack; "but don't forget that we're castaways, the island may be uninhabited, and there may be nothing to eat on it."

"Don't say that there's nothing to eat in sight, for I'm 'most starved."

"I didn't say there wasn't. I only just hinted at it."

"If there wasn't anything to eat here we'd starve to death."

"We certainly would."

"Let's go and investigate the place. We might better do that than stay here."

"I'm with you. Anything to get away from the mate, who has it in for me hard."

It was now broad daylight, with every prospect of a fair day ahead. It was still blowing hard, and the sea was like a boiling cauldron, but neither of those facts bothered the boys now since they had the solid ground under them. They looked up and down the shore, which curved out of view in both directions and saw a long sandy beach backed by thick tropical vegetation, through which odd-looking trees, which the boys soon learned were of the cocoanut variety, shot up like turfy-headed sentinels, nodding to the wind. Jack and Joe started for the line of vegetation and soon entered.

They stopped at the foot of one of the cocoanut palms. Joe's hungry eyes soon spied a cluster of fruit among the leaves at the top. The trunk of the tree was not thick, and was as smooth as a billiard cue. It did not look hard for a sailor to climb, and Joe, as soon as he made out the character of the tree, lost no time in trying to shin up. He soon found he had tackled a tough proposition for, sailor though he might be called, it was no easy job to get within reaching distance of the fruit. Jack watched his eager efforts, but seeing him slide back a foot every time he went up two, concluded to try his luck with the next tree, a few yards away.

He also realized that climbing a cocoanut tree was a strenuous proceeding. He stuck to it, however, being himself, for since the gale struck the Cormorant the crew had had very little to eat, as the cook couldn't do much in the galley, and after a time he got to the top.

Looking back he saw Joe still away about two-thirds up. Jack completely denuded the tree of its shelly fruit, and then slid down to the ground. Joe was reaching out for one of the big nuts, and maintaining his elevated perch with great difficulty.

"I've got quite a bunch, Joe; "but seeing that you're up there you can throw two or three of the cocoanuts down."

Joe detached one and was in the act of repeating the performance when his hold on the tree slackened and he shot down more than half way before he managed to stop himself.

"Let the others slide, Joe," said Jack, laughingly; "I've got more than enough for us both

here. They're full of milk, and that, with the pulp, will take the edge off our hunger."

Joe finished his descent and was soon busy with Jack in boring a hole in one end of a nut with his sailor's knife. As soon as the nuts were properly punctured the boys lifted the holes to their lips and drank long and deep of the milk, which to their famished palates tasted like the nectar of the gods.

"My! but that was good," said Joe, removing the nut from his lips to take a breath. "Who'd have thought the stuff would taste so fine?"

"Anything palatable tastes first-rate to half-starved persons like you and me," replied Jack, beginning to split open his nut.

He was soon busy chewing on the toothsome pulp, and Joe hastened to follow his lead. They felt like new boys after they had eaten as much of the fruit as they cared for.

"We'd better carry the rest of these nuts with us," said Joe, tucking one under each of his arms.

"All right; but there seems to be plenty on the island, in this locality at least," answered Jack.

With four nuts in their possession, they started forward with fresh courage. As long as the cocoanuts held out they would not starve, though a steady diet of cocoanut milk and pulp would soon have palled upon their palates.

"This is a regular tropical island," said Joe. "I wonder whereabouts it is?"

"I'll never tell you. All I know about our location is that the brig passed one of the Fiji group three days ago. The storm, however, drove us way off our course, so we may be several hundred miles away from the Fijis," said Jack.

"The mate may know, but we can't ask him. The further we get away from him the better you'll like it, I guess. So will I, for I'm not stuck on his society."

"When people are shipwrecked together it ought to be to their interest to maintain a friendly footing."

"That's right; but we can't afford to trust Redriff. The least he would do would be to order us around as if we were still aboard the brig. Now that we're ashore, and the brig is lost, I don't care to have him boss me."

"He hasn't any right to do so. His authority ceased with the brig."

"That wouldn't make any difference to him."

"I don't suppose it would, so I agree with you that it is better to keep clear of him."

"If he's hungry let him get his own cocoanuts. I'll bet he'll have a time doing it," chuckled Joe.

The further the boys penetrated into the island, which appeared to be pretty level in its conformation, the richer grew the vegetation. Finally they reached a small grove of wild bananas. Here they stopped to top off their late feast with several of the luscious fruit, which was ripening in the sunshine.

"They went to the right spot," said Joe, smacking his lips.

"Yes, they're uncommonly good," replied Jack, satisfied that he had never tasted such bananas in his life before. "If you've eaten all you want we'll go on."

"I'm ready. I don't care whether the island is inhabited or not, for we won't starve with all this fruit at hand."

"Fruit is all right in its way, but I'd like something more satisfying as the chief article of my diet."

They found another variety of tree with a species of fruit on it which neither was able to recognize. It happened to be what is known as bread-fruit, and not palatable unless cooked. Joe climbed up and pulled a specimen down. When they tasted it they were satisfied that they did not want any of it. There were likewise other trees that bore no fruit at all. The sap of one of these, when prepared, furnished the natives of the South Seas with a refreshing, but intoxicating, beverage called vugena. They met with a species of climbing plant, the root of which formed, when roasted or boiled, a wholesome, palatable and nutritious food. This was known as the yam, but the boy's ignorance of the nature of the plant prevented them from recognizing, as in the case of the bread-fruit, a very excellent article of provender. After walking perhaps half a mile the lads came in sight of the heaving ocean again, which marked the limit of the island in that direction. So far they had seen not the slightest evidence that the place was inhabited.

"I guess the mate and ourselves are the only ones on the island," said Jack.

"Looks like it," replied Joe.

"Which means that all the rest of the officers and crew of the Cormorant are lost."

"I guess so."

"Let's walk around by the shore and see about how large the island is."

Joe was willing, so they started to tramp the long stretch of beach on which the sea was breaking in tumultuous confusion. As they proceeded they met with bits of wreckage from the brig, which was still perched upon a rocky reef within a quarter of a mile of the shore facing Coffin Rock. Among other things that had come ashore was one of the Cormorant's boats. Two sets of oars were lashed inside of it, and it appeared to be in good condition.

"Here's a find," said Jack, as they stood beside it, looking it over. "We will be able to leave this island whenever we want to."

"Then we'd better haul it up in the bushes and hide it, for the mate will be sure to see it if we leave it here," replied Joe.

"That won't do. It would fall to pieces out of the water for any time."

"If the water wasn't so rough we could row around the island instead of walking. Perhaps we might run across a creek where we could hide it by covering it with vegetation."

"We'll shove it into the water and haul it along by the painter. We'll need this boat to visit Coffin Rock at the first chance we have."

"What's the use of visiting the rock while the mate is on the island? If we made any discoveries he'd know it, for he'll keep his eyes on us, and then he'd try to do us up somehow."

Jack finally decided to leave the boat where it was, as it was above high tide line. About a hundred yards from the spot they saw a break in the beach. Here the water rushed up into a little lagoon about thirty yards in diameter.

"This is just the place to fetch the boat," said Joe.

Jack agreed with him, so they went back and floating the little craft into which they dropped

the cocoanuts, after considerable exertion, drew it around and up into the lagoon, where they concealed it in a mass of rushes. Walking around the lagoon they regained the beach and continued on their way. At length they came in sight of Coffin Rock again, and they looked around for the mate. They didn't see him anywhere. Mark Redriff had recovered his senses and gone off somewhere.

CHAPTER VI.—The Mate and the Boys Come Together.

The boys stood on the beach near where they had come ashore and looked at Coffin Rock with a good deal of curiosity and interest. It seemed a strange coincidence that they should be cast away on the very island they wanted to reach.

That yonder rock was the hiding-place of the pirate's treasure they did not doubt, for they could not believe that there could be two such huge coffin-shaped rocks in the South Seas. It certainly bore an extraordinary resemblance to an old wooden coffin. How nature had formed it so accurately in that gruesome shape they could not guess. It stood a short distance from the beach, and its base was now buried in a mass of yeasty foam. After the boys had looked at it as much as they cared to, and speculated about the treasure which they believed to be hidden at its base, they continued on their way along the shore.

"I wonder where Redriff went off to?" said Jack.

"I guess he was hungry and went in search of something to eat," said Joe.

"We're bound to meet him before long, for this island isn't so big. I see no reason why he should try to injure either of us. He's taken his revenge for that saloon scrap out of me many times over. It's about time that he let up."

"That's what I think; but some men never can be decent. It isn't in their nature to be so."

The beach in the neighborhood of Coffin Rock was thickly strewn with wreckage and some of the lighter parts of the brig's cargo, while the sea was dotted with additional flotsam coming shoreward. The boys examined many of the things beached by the waves, and those that looked worth saving they pulled well above the highest water line. Passing around a narrow projecting point they lost sight of Coffin Rock and the wreck, and by and by they reached the place on the shore where they had come out at when they crossed the island.

"We have now been entirely around the island, and I should judge that its circumference is not much over a mile, or a mile and a half at the outside," said Jack. "I am satisfied there is nobody on it but we two and the mate, for the wreck would surely have attracted the attention of the inhabitants were there any."

"Say, what's that yonder?" asked Joe, pointing across the water. "Looks like another island, and a bigger one."

"That's what it is. This island is nearly level with the ocean, while that one is much higher or we couldn't see it at the distance it is from here."

"I thought it was a cloud at first. There may be people living there."

"If there are they are probably natives, and I'd rather have their room than their company."

At that moment there was a rustle in the vegetation and presently Mark Redriff came out on the beach. Looking around he spied the two boys sitting on the sand in the sunshine. Their presence was somewhat of a surprise to him, for he had supposed he was the only person who had reached the island alive. He came up to them.

"So you chaps were lucky enough to get ashore," he said, eyeing them sharply.

"Yes, sir," replied Jack. "Joe came on a task, and you know I was on the spar that helped to save your life."

"Yes, I know it," returned the mate, in a shifty tone. "How came I on that spar?"

"When the brig struck and I found myself in the water that spar came along and I got on it," said Jack. "Just then I saw you sweeping past in a half-drowned condition, and I reached out, grabbed you and hauled you over the spar in front of me. That's how you came to be on it. If I hadn't held you fast you'd have been swept off, so I don't think you treated me right when you recovered your senses."

"What did I do?"

"I guess you remember what you did. You seized me by the throat and ordered me to get off the spar. If this island hadn't been close at hand you'd have shown your gratitude by drowning me."

"I don't recollect treating you that way. I must have been out of my senses," replied Redriff, with a shifty look. "Since you say that you saved my life, why, of course, I thank you for doing so. I admit that I didn't treat you very well aboard the brig, but that's my way of doing business. Now that the brig has been lost and I have no longer any authority over you, let's be friends," and he held out his hand to the boy.

Although Jack distrusted his offer of friendship he could not refuse to accept it for what it was worth, so he got up and shook hands with the man.

Redriff then offered his hand to Joe, and the lad took it.

"We're the only three that escaped from the Cormorant so there is no use of having any hard feelings between us," said the mate, seating himself beside the boys.

"That's what I think," replied Jack, willing to forgive his tyrant if the man really meant to be friendly.

"No one can tell how long we may have to remain here, so it would be foolish for us not to putt together," continued Redriff, evidently trying to ingratiate himself with the lads.

"Do you know what island this is, and whereabouts on the ocean it is situated?" asked Jack.

"It's down on the chart of these waters as Tongo Island, and is one of the Friendly group, the smallest of the bunch."

"Then that island yonder is another of the group?" said Jack, pointing seaward.

The mate looked in the direction indicated and then nodded his head.

"We were more than one hundred miles from here by our reckoning, when the gale struck us," he said. "We had had a clear sea ahead. You can see how far we were carried out of our course."

"What's the chance of our being rescued?"

"Not the best in the world. We may not see a vessel in a month, and then too far off to be of any use to us."

"Then we're likely to stay here some time?"

"Quite likely."

"With nothing to eat but fruit?"

"We can find shellfish."

"Can we?" asked Jack, with interest. "Where?"

"In the rocks along shore. If we had a line we could catch fish."

"I don't like raw shellfish or any other kind," said Joe, with a wry face.

"It isn't to be sneezed at when you're hungry," replied the mate.

"I'm willing to put up with cocoanuts and bananas," said Joe.

"There are yams and bread-fruit, too."

"Are there?" exclaimed Joe, with a look of interest. "We didn't see any."

"But they are not palatable unless they're cooked."

"Oh!" cried Joe. "Then what good are they to us? We have no way of making a fire."

"Yes, we have," said the mate.

"How?"

"I have a magnifying glass in my pocket. We can collect a pile of dry vegetation and the glass will bring the sun's rays to a focus and set it on fire."

"That's fine," cried Joe, gleefully. "Then we'll be able to cook the fish as well as the yams and bread-fruit."

Jack was going to tell the mate about the boat he and Joe had secured, but changed his mind for the present. Then he thought he'd try and draw out Redriff on the subject of Coffin Rock, and see if he'd say anything about the treasure.

"That's an odd-looking rock on the other side of the island, at the place where we came ashore," he said. "It's the exact shape of a coffin. I suppose you noticed it?"

"That's Coffin Rock," replied the mate.

"Have you heard of it before?"

"Oh, yes. The island is sometimes called Coffin Rock."

"I heard Bill Blaine speak about it. He said some pirate buried his gold at the base of it more than fifty years ago."

"That's only a sailor's yarn. There's nothing in it," said the mate.

"I also heard the master of a ship in the China trade speak about the rock, and he also claimed that there was treasure hidden somewhere about the rock."

"All rot," returned Redriff, impatiently. "If anything of that kind had been hidden in the rock, supposing that there was a place to hide it, it would have been searched for long ago and found."

"Then you don't believe there's any treasure in the rock?"

"Of course I don't."

Evidently Mark Redriff didn't want to let the secret out.

CHAPTER VII.—The Shipwrecked Captain and His Daughter.

After Redriff and the boys had talked a while longer Joe suggested that it was about time for dinner.

"Are you hungry again, so soon?" laughed Jack.

"So soon." exclaimed Joe. "Why, it's three or four hours since we had a light breakfast. Just think how many hours before that we went without a mouthful. Do you know I could eat the biggest square meal at this moment I ever sat down to."

"Well, what will you have for dinner? How would you like a steak and onions with French fried potatoes, bread and butter, coffee and—"

"Hold on. You make my mouth water, and there's nothing but fruit in sight."

"When the sea is smoother we'll get some shell-fish," said Redriff.

"That won't be till tomorrow," said Joe. "Let's get some more cocoanuts and bananas."

The mate wasn't particularly hungry, as he had filled up on bananas a short time before, but he accompanied the boys and partook of the milk and part of the pulp of one cocoanut, while the boys got away with two small ones each. Before they had finished he went off in the direction of Coffin Rock, and Jack and Joe were not sorry to lose his company.

"In the course of a few hours it will be night," said Jack, "so the momentous question to be considered next is where are we going to sleep?"

"Somewhere about in the bushes, I guess," replied Joe, "as I haven't seen any tree that we could roost in."

"The bushes, or anywhere, in fact, is good enough, as long as the weather is fair; but it's bound to rain some time, and when it rains in the tropics it comes down like the Falls of Niagara, and then we'll need some kind of a decent shelter."

"I don't know where we're going to find it on this island."

"Then we'll have to build it the best way we know how."

"There is plenty of stuff come ashore to make a house if we had tools to work with."

"As we haven't tools we must build it without."

"I don't see how we're going to do it."

"Necessity is the mother of invention, Joe. I'll bet we'll find a way to get around the problem."

"I'll take your word for it," grinned Joe. "Now s'pose we look over the rest of the interior of the island. We can't spend the afternoon to better advantage."

Accordingly they started to explore the heart of the island. They had gone perhaps an eighth of a mile, when suddenly they heard a female voice singing. The boys stopped and looked at each other.

"What's that?" said Joe. "Sounds like a woman's voice."

"It is a girl singing," said Jack. "Evidently there are others on this island besides ourselves."

"Then we can't do better than make their acquaintance," said Joe.

"Come on. There can't be any danger where there's a woman."

The singing went on and came from behind a thick wall of vegetation. Pushing their way through the tall bushes the boys came out into an open space. Seated before the door of a good-sized hut was a beautiful girl of seventeen, her skin as brown as a berry from exposure to a tropical sun. She was sewing on some kind of a

garment intended for female use. The words of the song now came distinctly to the ears of the boys, and they were delighted to recognize them as English. The girl ceased singing and looked up in a startled way on hearing the approach of the visitors. Evidently she did not dream that there were others on the island at that moment besides herself and the one companion of her involuntary exile. She was somewhat reassured when she saw that the strangers were two boys dressed in rough attire of modern sailors, and she rose from her home-made chair to receive them.

"I beg your pardon for this intrusion, miss," said Jack, advancing in the lead; "but we are a couple of shipwrecked boys looking around this island on which the waves tossed us a few hours ago. We thought the island uninhabited until we heard your voice singing a song, the air of which seems familiar to me. I trust that, under the circumstances, you will receive us as friends, for we are in hard luck."

"You are welcome, both of you, to such poor hospitality as I and my father can offer you," she replied, with a smile.

"Thank you. I will introduce myself and companion. My name is Jack Granville, and I am a native of California. My friend's name is Joe Anderson. He also is an American. And now we shall be glad to know your name and make the acquaintance of your father."

"My name is Elsie Howe, and I, too, was born in California, in the city of San Francisco," she replied. "My father, who is inside, suffering from the effects of a fall among the rocks, is Captain Nat Howe. We, too, were wrecked on this island some months ago. Our vessel, the three-masted schooner Golden Gate, was driven ashore here, and everybody aboard, but father and myself, were lost."

"You have my sympathy, Miss Howe," replied Jack. "It's bad enough for men or boys to be cast away on an out-of-the-way island, but for a girl to suffer the same fate must be pretty rough on her."

"Oh, I am not unhappy in spite of my comparatively lonesome situation. Where was your ship bound?" she asked.

"From San Francisco to Sydney. We were caught in the heavy gale of the last day or two, which you must have felt, too. The vessel was old and she sprang a leak. We worked steadily at the pumps for nearly twenty hours, when she dashed upon the reef a quarter of a mile from the island in that direction," and Jack waved his arm. "She went almost to pieces in a few minutes. At any rate my companion and I were thrown into the sea, with the rest of the crew and the officers, and were so fortunate as to reach the beach."

"Then you and your friend are the only survivors?"

"No. I saved the chief mate of the brig and he is on the island. The three of us are the sole survivors."

"Where is he?"

"Somewhere over by Coffin Rock."

"If you will excuse me I will see if my father is awake."

She entered the hut and was away several minutes, during which time the boys examined

the hut and its surroundings with curious interest.

"My father will be glad to see you both," the girl said, coming to the door.

Accordingly, Jack and Joe walked into the small building. On a bunk, that seemed once to have belonged to a vessel, lay Captain Howe, partially dressed. Jack was surprised to see the room into which he and his companion were ushered so well furnished with household articles, even down to a small cook-stove standing in one corner. The captain, who was a bearded man of middle age and good physique, welcomed them with a smile and cheery tones.

"Glad to see you, my lads," he said. "You will have to excuse me getting up, but a somewhat damaged limb, which I got the other day while searching for a mess of shellfish among the rocks, keeps me prisoner at present to this couch."

"Don't apologize, captain," replied Jack. "We are sorry to find you under the weather, but I guess you'll be up and moving in a short time."

"I hope so, my lad; but the prospects are not very encouraging at this moment. I gave my limb a bad twist, and as Nature is the only doctor and drug store I can call upon in this out-of-the-way spot, why, it will take time to effect a cure."

"You seem to be very comfortable here, considering that you and your daughter were wrecked on this island. We ourselves were wrecked here this morning, and we were glad to escape with our lives."

"My craft, the schooner Golden Gate, which sailed from San Francisco some months ago, came ashore on the beach and was left after the gale in pretty good shape. All the things you see here, and others in my daughter's room, came out of her. It was a long time before she finally broke up during another severe storm, and in the interval I secured from her about everything worth having."

"You were lucky," replied Jack. "Did you build this house yourself?"

"I did with my daughter's assistance."

"A regular carpenter couldn't have done it better. It is a luxury I didn't expect to find on the island."

"It answers very well as a serviceable protection against both the elements and the heat of the sun. As you and your companion, I presume, have nothing but what you stand in, you are welcome to make my house your home until some vessel turns up and we are all taken off."

"Thank you, captain. It is almost too much for us to expect of you."

"Don't mention it, my lads. You don't imagine, I hope, that I would turn you away. You are both welcome to everything we have at our disposal."

"We thank you gratefully, captain. But we are not the only survivors of the brig. The chief mate also came ashore with us."

"Then, of course, I will extend my hospitality to him, also. It will kind of crowd us until I am able to help you put up an addition to the cabin."

"Oh, I guess we'll be able to do that without your aid if there are tools at hand, and material enough to do the job."

"There is wood enough left, and some sailcloth, which will answer the purpose. As for tools, I have the carpenter's chest that belonged to my schooner. I could not have built this cabin without it."

"I suppose we had better go and hunt the mate up and bring him here?"

"Do so by all means. What was the name of your vessel?"

"The Cormorant."

The captain uttered an exclamation.

"And the name of your chief mate is—"

"Mark Redriff, at your service," said a voice from the door, interrupting him, and the mate of the wrecked brig walked into the room with an evil smile on his sunburned and bearded countenance.

Elsie Howe uttered a suppressed cry and shrank back while the captain looked at Redriff in no kindly way.

CHAPTER VIII.—Mark Redriff's Ultimatum.

Jack and Joe stared in surprise at the unexpected situation. Redriff, however, seemed to enjoy the dismay that his appearance had created. The smile that curled around his mouth did not bode any good for the crippled skipper and his lovely daughter. It was a thoroughly wicked smile, and a triumphant one, too.

"Well, you don't seem glad to see me, Captain Howe," he sneered.

"To tell you the plain truth, I'd rather see any other man living than you," answered the captain, in a tone that showed how unwelcome Redriff was in the cabin.

"I dare say," replied the mate, with another sneer. "And what says Miss Elsie?"

He turned and looked gloatingly at the shrinking girl, but she answered him never a word, only stared in a frightened way in his face.

"So you've been wrecked on this island, Mark Redriff," said the captain. "It is a singular fate that we, too, have suffered a like disaster, and thus we are once more brought face to face with you under circumstances that cannot but be distasteful to my daughter and myself."

"If it's the hand of fate, as you say, why not accept it as an indication that it is futile for you to discourage my union with your daughter?"

"I'd rather see her dead than your wife," replied Captain Howe, with energy.

"Indeed!" said Redriff, with an ugly look.

"And I'd rather die than marry you," put in

The mate chuckled.

Elsie, with equal fervor.

"She is but a child—barely seventeen," went on the captain, "while you are a man of forty. Still, as you know, that is not the chief objection. If you were a good, sober man, and my child cared for you—"

"I want none of your sermons, Captain Howe," replied Redriff, angrily. "What I want is your daughter, and, let me tell you once more, I mean to have her."

"Not while I live and can raise my hand to protect her," answered the captain, resolutely.

"Bah! You're an old dotard, and don't know what is good for your daughter. I will make her a lady. She shall have a grand house to live in, with servants, her horses and carriages, and every wish gratified."

"Where do you expect to get the money from to produce the picture you have drawn—you, who are standing before us now a shipwrecked man, with scarcely a shirt to your back?"

"Where?" cried Redriff, forgetting his usual caution under the spur of the situation. "Right here on this island."

"On this island!" exclaimed the captain. "Are you crazy?"

"Not at all, Captain Howe. I hold the secret of a chest of gold. It is hidden at the base of—"

He recollects himself and stopped abruptly.

"At the base of what?" asked the captain.

"That's my business," replied Redriff curtly. "Give your consent to my marriage with your daughter at the earliest practical moment and you shall know."

"I don't wish to know on those terms. If what you say was true; if you brought to my cabin a king's ransom and laid it at my feet as the price of my child's hand, I would still refuse my consent. And she herself spurns your gold as if it were the merest dross. Leave us in peace, Mark Redriff. You are not the kind of man to make any woman happy, least of all my dear child."

"Fool! Know you not that you and your daughter are in my power?"

"In your power?"

"Aye! If I choose to tear your daughter from you now can you prevent me—you, who are stretched helpless with a lame limb on that bunk? Look at that arm," and the mate bared the sinewy member. "Can either of you resist its strength? I will have my way. The girl shall give me her sacred promise, with Heaven as a witness, now, that she will become my wife. That is my ultimatum, and I want an answer from you both immediately."

Elsie uttered a cry and buried her face in her hands, while the captain raised himself with difficulty into a sitting posture.

"It is like you, you scoundrel, to take advantage of our weakness," he said, emotion and anger blended in his words; "but, nevertheless, we defy you. Leave my cabin this instant, and never let us see your wicked face again."

"You're a joker, you are," laughed Redriff, banteringly.

"Oh, father, is there no one to protect us from this man?"

Jack, who had, in common with his companion, been a silent and indignant spectator of the scene felt as if the words were addressed to him and Joe.

All the chivalry of his nature came to the surface.

After that appeal he could no longer remain inactive in the background.

Stepping forward he said resolutely:

"Yes, miss, I will protect both you and your father with my life, if need be, and so will my friend, Joe."

His words and attitude caused something of a sensation.

The mate had forgotten the presence of the two boys, and, indeed, so had Captain Howe and his daughter.

Jack's interposition was like a ray of bright sunshine breaking through a rift in a sky filled with angry storm clouds.

The eyes of the three people were turned upon him at once.

The captain looked at him in surprise; the mate with angry disdain, while the girl saw in the flash of his eyes, and manly, determined bearing,

a young knight errant, of heroic mold, who had unexpectedly come to her rescue.

Redriff was the first to speak.

"How dare you butt in, you scum of the sea!" he snarled, furiously.

"Why shouldn't I when I see a man of your stamp trying to take a coward's advantage of a man who is physically unable to protect himself in his hour of need?" replied Jack, coolly.

"Blame you! Dare you talk to me in that fashion? You a foremast hand!" roared Redriff.

"I am not a foremast hand at this moment, and you are not my mate. We are on equal terms now. I will talk to you as I choose—as you deserve."

"So you think we are on equal terms, do you?" sneered the mate, with an imprecation. "I will soon show you that you are laboring under the greatest mistake of your life. Get out of this cabin at once—you and your companion—or I will break every bone in your body, and then throw you into the sea as food for the sharks."

"I won't get out at your order," replied Jack.

"Won't you? Then we'll see."

The mate bared his arm for action.

He was a strong man, and gloried in his brute strength. That's why he took a pleasure in knocking the sailors around aboard ship at the slightest provocation. As a boy he had been a bully and oppressor of the weak. As a man he carried out the same line of action when he felt sure of his ground. Jack looked no match for him, though he had grown strong and tough since he came to sea. But he was as active as a cat, and he had what the mate lacked—true grit.

"Now get out," said Redriff, walking up to him.

Jack had no intention of letting the man put his hands on him if he could help it, so he jumped aside. The mate then dashed at him, aiming a vicious blow at his face. Jack dodged and realizing that defensive tactics would not avail he took advantage of the opening he saw and slugged Redriff in the jaw with every ounce of strength he could bring to bear. The mate was staggered by the shock, which he had not looked for. Before he could recover, the boy, who felt that he was in for it now, dashed at him, and smashed him under the ear. The man threw up his arms wildly to steady himself, and that gave Jack all the chance he wanted. He stepped up and jabbed Redriff a smashing blow on the point of the jaw. The mate went down, completely knocked out, and lay like a log.

"Grab him by the legs, Joe, and we'll throw him out," said Jack.

The boys seized the ruffian, whose presence was both a menace and an insult to Captain Howe and his daughter, lifted him from the floor and carried him outside. They did not drop him there, but went on till they struck the beach. There they left him to recover at his leisure.

CHAPTER IX.—Jack and Joe in Luck.

When the boys returned to the cabin Jack was received as a hero.

"You are a brave lad," said the captain, "and I am grateful to you for what you have done in

defense of my dear child. Had I not been bound to this bunk by my injury I would have thrown him out of the cabin ere he had proceeded half as far as he went. He is a coward and a cur, and you treated him as he deserved."

"He didn't get half that's coming to him. He tyrannized over me during the whole of the voyage from San Francisco, although I did the best I knew how to please him and fulfill my duties. I never expected to retaliate, but his actions toward you and your daughter, under circumstances that placed you at his mercy, were more than I could stand, so I chipped in. I regret, Miss Howe, that I had to cause a disturbance in your presence, but there was no escape from it," said Jack.

"I am very, very grateful to you, Mr. Granville," Elsie said, looking at him with respect and admiration. "Indeed, I shall never forget what you did in my behalf."

"You are welcome," he answered, his nerves thrilling under the look she gave him. "Until your father is able to defend you, you may consider Joe and myself your sworn protectors. No harm shall come to you, either from Mark Redriff or any other source, as long as we are within hail."

Elsie flashed a look of gratitude and confidence at him.

"Thank you, young man," said Captain Howe. "It is a fortunate circumstance that we have you and your friend to call on in case of need. I need only repeat what I told you before the arrival of Redriff, that you must consider this cabin your home as long as the four of us are fated to remain on this island."

"We accept your kind hospitality and will try and make ourselves useful in return," replied Jack.

"I suppose we may expect more trouble from Redriff, who is a thoroughly bad man," said the captain.

"Joe and I will take care of him, don't you fear."

"You seem able to handle him, yourself. The easy way you knocked him out was a great surprise to me. I had no idea you would be able to do anything with him."

"I took boxing lessons of a professor in Oakland, where my home is, and he taught me how to hit out to the best advantage, as well as to defend myself."

"Your knowledge served you well on this occasion," smiled the captain.

"Yes. When a fellow is skilled in the art of self-defense he feels a whole lot more confidence in himself when up against trouble."

The captain nodded.

"I wonder what the rascal meant when he said that he held the secret of a chest of gold?" said Captain Howe, reflectively.

"I can tell you, sir," replied Jack.

"You can?" said the captain, in surprise. "Pray explain."

"He referred to the treasure of Coffin Rock."

"I don't understand what you mean."

"You know there is a big coffin-shaped rock close to the beach yonder?" said Jack, waving his hand to the westward.

"Oh, yes. It is a singular-looking rock, and certainly resembles a coffin."

"It is said that a certain pirate, who plundered vessels in these seas more than fifty years ago, buried a chest of gold at the base of that rock, and that it is still hidden in the original spot."

"I'm afraid there is more rumor than truth in the story, or that the treasure has been found by someone in the secret long ago."

"I have an idea that it is there yet. Others also believe the fact. Redriff is positive of it. Had the Cormorant reached Sydney in safety, he would have left the brig and embarked with a man of means named Edwards, who is now on his way from San Francisco to Australia by steamer for that purpose, on a hunt for the treasure."

"Is it possible!"

"I could prove it by a letter, written by Edwards, which accidentally came into my possession; but the letter is in my bag in the forecastle of the brig, so it's as good as lost."

"I never would have put any confidence in such a yarn," said the captain.

"I put confidence enough in it to run away from home on purpose to try and reach this island."

"Do you really mean that?" asked the captain, in astonishment.

"I do. It was through the story of the treasure told me by the mate of the ship Golden Magnet that I became a sailor, though I did not actually ship on board the Cormorant of my free will. Joe and I were shanghaied. You know what that means."

"I certainly do. How did it happen?"

"If you wish I'll tell you my story from the beginning."

"We shall be glad to hear it."

"No doubt you will not approve of the course I followed, but the lure of gold was too strong for me to resist. That, coupled with a certain discomfort at home which I experienced through the addition of a step-father, will account for my actions," said Jack, who proceeded to explain how he had left his home without saying a word to his mother or his step-father, and then told all that had happened to him since.

Captain Howe and his daughter listened to him with attention, while Joe, on a hint from Jack, seated himself in the doorway, and kept a wary lookout for the possible reappearance of Mark Redriff. That rascal, however, did not return. Privately the captain thought that the boy had done a very foolish thing in leaving his home to go in search of a treasure which, for all he really knew to the contrary, might exist only in the minds of those who themselves had heard about it from others no more able to prove its authenticity. The skipper did not care to chide the lad who had done him and his daughter so signal a favor, so he made no special remark on Jack's conduct. What Elsie thought she herself alone knew, and she would have been the last to criticize the boy's line of action. By this time the sun was well down in the heavens, and as night in the tropics follows the setting of that luminary with scarcely an interval of twilight, the girl said it was time for her to prepare supper.

At the mention of the word Joe's eyes began to glisten and his mouth to water. Without any idea what the bill-of-fare would consist of, he believed it would be more substantial than the

fruit diet off which he and Jack had breakfasted and dined. And he was not wrong, for Elsie brought out a jar of potted tongue and a can of preserved corn beef, together with an ample supply of soda crackers. She also lighted a fire to make a pot of coffee. Jack and Joe, during the interval occupied with the supper preparations, took a walk around the immediate neighborhood to see whether there were any signs of the mate. Finding there were not, they extended their walk to the beach where they had left Redriff. He was not there. He had recovered and gone off to meditate upon the revenge he intended to exact for the rough-house treatment he had experienced at Jack's hands. As the boys approached the cabin on their return the aroma of fine coffee saluted their nostrils.

"Do you smell that? It's coffee," cried Joe, grabbing his friend by the arm.

"Yes, and the real article," answered Jack, feeling as delighted as Joe at the prospect of having a cup of it.

"We've struck a regular snap," said Joe. "I wouldn't be surprised if we find some kind of meat on the table, though where it is to come from I couldn't guess. Maybe we'll have some fish. My! but I'm hungry. The smell of the coffee makes me feel how famished I am."

When they entered the cabin Joe nearly had a fit when he saw the tongue, and corned beef, and crackers, together with baked yam, warmed over, bread-fruit, bananas and half a cocoanut full of milk beside each plate.

"Who'd think we were on a lone island in the South Seas!" he cried. "Plates, knives and forks, spoons, and all the delicacies of the season. Jack and I have certainly landed on our feet."

The captain explained that everything they saw came out of the wrecked schooner, "Golden Gate."

"Elsie's room is full of the stuff we saved," said the skipper. "There's at least six months' supplies for the four of us. And there are clothes enough to keep us well supplied with raiment for a much longer time."

Joe certainly filled up on meat at supper, and if he ate one cracker, he got away with a round dozen, not to speak of two cups of coffee, which he declared was the finest he had ever tasted. Jack also did justice to the substantial fare, and felt like a new boy when the meal was over. It was dark by that time, and the boys helped Elsie wash the dishes and tidy the living-room up. For that night at least it was arranged that the boys would have to put up with a blanket apiece on the floor.

"We'll put up with anything to have a roof over our heads," said Jack, cheerfully.

A lantern furnished illumination to the room until the work was finished and then it was put out, and all hands conversed together in the dark, though it was not so very dark, for the sky was brilliant with stars and the air as clear as a bell.

"By the way," said Jack, "I think that Joe and I ought to stand watch by turn. I think it more than probable that Mark Redriff will come prowling around here bent on mischief, and it wouldn't do for him to catch us unawares. He would be likely to put me out of business, and there is no telling how he would treat Joe. Then he'd have a clear field again with you and Miss Elsie."

"I am prepared now for him if he should come,"

said Captain Howe, exhibiting a revolver. "I have more weapons in the other room. Elsie will give you each a revolver to protect yourselves against Redriff. We also have a rifle and plenty of cartridges in case of need. When we thought ourselves the sole dwellers on the island we had no thought of the need of arms. Now that we have to contend against such a rascal as Redriff, we shall, henceforth, take care to be able to defend ourselves against him."

Elsie left the room and presently returned with two loaded revolvers which she handed to Jack and Joe.

"When the mate gets a sight of these poppers he'll give us a wide berth," said Jack, with a feeling of satisfaction. "He made the mistake of his life by cutting up rough here. Had he behaved himself you might have consented to harbor him, in spite of his past conduct towards your daughter."

"I don't say that I wouldn't have done so on humane principles, but it would have been much against my grain, for he is a man I never could trust," replied the captain.

After awhile Jack brought up the subject again of the treasure of Coffin Rock.

"Since we are here on the spot, Joe and I are going to search for it, even if nothing comes of it. Redriff told us that we might not be taken off the island for months, and your experience bears him out. After the strenuous time I've been through on account of my belief that the gold is hidden somewhere about the rock, it will be a source of satisfaction to prove, if possible, the truth or falsity of the statement made to me by the mate of the Golden Magnet. He even indicated where he believed the place was on the rock, never dreaming that I ever would take it into my head to try and verify his story, or if I did, that I would find a chance to do so," said Jack.

"You might as well employ your time that way as any other," smiled the captain. "I have no great faith in your achieving any results, but still there is no telling but there might be something in the yarn after all."

"There is generally a smoldering fire where you see smoke," replied Jack.

"You'll have to keep your weather eye lifting for Redriff, for he claims to possess the secret of the treasure, and will assuredly object to you poaching on his preserves, as the saying is. I advise you to always go together to the rock, which can be reached at low tide by walking out through a few inches of water, and then he is not likely to come upon you unawares."

"We'll look out for him, captain," said Jack, in a confident tone.

Elsie now got up and said good-night to everybody, kissing her father in a loving way, and asking him if he was comfortable. He said he was and she retired to her own room. It was arranged between the boys that Jack should stand watch till midnight. He would be able to calculate the time by a small clock which had come from the schooner. Joe was then to go on and watch till daylight, when Jack would relieve him. This matter being satisfactorily settled, Jack took his seat by the door, while Joe curled himself up in his blanket and with the captain was presently asleep.

CHAPTER X.—Nipping a Ruffian's Purpose in the Bud.

Jack did not realize how fagged out he was after what he had been through in the late storm till he started to keep watch at the door of the cabin. With no one to talk to the warmth of the night soon overcame him and he began to nod at his post. He got up and shook himself, walked around the building and sat down again. At the end of five minutes he became somnolent again. This would never do. He found that the effort to keep awake was positively painful. So he left his seat and walked slowly around the thick vegetation which completely surrounded the cabin. Finding this monotonous, he extended his ramble in the direction of Coffin Rock. Reaching the edge of the vegetation where it lined the top of the beach, he looked out across the ocean, now grown comparatively calm, toward the spot where he and Joe had last seen the wreck of the Cormorant pointing her bowsprit to the sky. The full moon, rising behind him, threw a silver sheen upon the undulating surface of the boundless waste of waters and brought out distinctly the wreck, and the rocks on which she had laid her devoted keel, for it was low tide at the moment.

"She's still there," said Jack to himself, "and probably will remain there while fine weather holds. As Captain Howe has weapons with which to stand off Mark Redriff, should he appear again at the cabin, Joe and I will not be needed as guards, and so I think it would be a good idea for us to take the boat we found, row out to the wreck some time tomorrow, and see if we can recover anything useful from her."

From the wreck Jack turned his attention to the weird-looking Coffin Rock, the base of which was now almost wholly uncovered by the receding of the tide. It stood out in the soft moonshine in its entirety—as like a coffin as ever one was shaped by human hands.

"As a manufacturer of freaks Nature is certainly a wonder," thought the boy. "I've read about all sorts of wonderful natural formations—of which they say the famous Giant's Causeway of Ireland is the most astonishing—but I doubt if a more realistic specimen of nature's handiwork exists in the world than this Coffin Rock. How the action of the wind and sea could have formed it so exactly, or what other cause was at the bottom of it, gets me. It actually gives one the creeps to look at it. It—hello, what's that?"

The last exclamation was drawn from Jack by the appearance of an animated object coming suddenly into view at its base.

"It's the mate," he muttered, after a close look at the moving figure. "He's searching for the location of the treasure, I'll be bound, for nothing else would take him there. He claimed that the secret was his, but it's clear he's no nearer to solving the problem than I am."

Squatting down in the vegetation, Jack continued to watch him. He was splashing around in about a foot of water, examining the surface of the rock closely. For an hour he kept his search up until the incoming tide had reached his knees, and then he desisted and returned to the beach. He came straight toward the spot where Jack crouched, and the boy deemed it prudent to

retire to a short distance. The mate entered the vegetation and made his way slowly in the direction of Captain Howe's cabin.

"I wonder if he's going there hoping to catch all hands napping? If he is he'll meet with a warm reception," muttered Jack, following him.

Redriff carried a short, stout cudgel in his hand which he had used to tap the rock with. It was a formidable weapon at short range in the hands of the scoundrel.

"If he got a fair crack at my head with that it would put me out of business," said Jack to himself. "Well, I don't mean to give him a chance to practice on me."

When Redriff reached the line of vegetation surrounding the cabin he paused to reconnoiter the clearing and the building. As those within were sound asleep, there was nothing to deter him from venturing forward. When Jack reached the spot he had vacated, Redriff was close to the door of the cabin, advancing in a stealthy way. The moonlight threw his figure into bold relief, and painted his shadow in a long silhouette on the turf. Reaching the open door he paused and tried to penetrate the gloom within. Doubtless he could hear the breathing of the two sleepers in the room, and that would enable him to locate them.

Besides, he knew exactly where the bunk was on which the captain reposed. He seemed in no hurry to enter probably feeling that the most of the night was before him in which to execute the nefarious purpose he had in his mind. Jack, holding his cocked revolver in his hand, debated what he should do to teach the rascal a salutary lesson. He didn't want to shoot him, not even to wound him, if he could avoid it, since humanity would compel the captain to succor him in his distress, and the rascal would surely turn upon his benefactor the moment he got well.

To fire wide was about the only way he could be scared off without doing him any harm. Accordingly just as Redriff seemed in the act of entering the door, Jack aimed so that the bullet would just miss him, but still make itself felt.

Then he pulled the trigger. There was a sharp crack and the startled ruffian fell in his knees in consternation.

"I hope I haven't hit him after all," muttered the boy.

A moment later he was reassured by seeing Redriff spring up and dart for the line of vegetation nearest to him, into which he disappeared with a dive.

"I hope that will settle him for good so far as coming here again is concerned," chuckled Jack, listening to the receding sounds made by the man in his flight through the vegetation of that part of the island.

Having accomplished his object, Jack returned to the cabin.

"Who's there?" in the captain's tones greeted his appearance at the door.

"Jack Granville," the boy replied.

"You fired your revolver, didn't you?"

"I did. I fired at the mate and frightened him away."

"He was coming here, then?"

"He was, bent on mischief."

"Where were you when you fired?"

"At the edge of the clearing."

"And where was Redriff?"

"At the door, in the act of entering."

"So near? How came you to let him steal a march on you?"

Jack explained how he had gone to the shore near Coffin Rock to shake off his sleepiness, and how he had seen the mate searching the rock for the treasure. He then went on to explain Redriff's subsequent movements, and how he had followed the ruffian to the cabin.

"You didn't hit him, I hope?" said the captain.

"No. I took care not to. There is no hospital in this neighborhood where he could be sent to."

"That was right. There is no call for us to injure him if we can avoid it, as long as we are armed and he isn't."

The captain turned over and went to sleep again, while Jack resumed his solitary watch at the door. Joe had not been aroused by the shooting. It would have taken a cannon shot near at hand to awaken him, so soundly was he sleeping. After a time Jack looked at the clock and saw that it was half-past eleven.

"In half an hour I will call Joe and then I'll have the chance to turn in," he thought.

Leaning his head against the wall he began thinking about Coffin Rock and its hidden treasure. Gradually his eyes closed and he dozed off without taking note of the fact. Soon he was sound asleep, and the cabin lay at the mercy of Redriff, had he plucked up resolution enough to venture back. Fortunately he didn't. He had found a soft spot in the vegetation, lain down and was soon sleeping himself.

So the hours of the night passed away and the tired Joe escaped his spell of watching, while Jack slept on, the sleep of utter weariness. At length Jack was awakened by the touch of a hand on his shoulder. He started up and found, to his surprise, that it was broad daylight. Elsie stood beside him, smiling down in his face.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, in a tone of chagrin. "I've been asleep. A pretty watchman, I am."

"What's the difference, since nothing has happened? You were tired, and it is hard to keep awake in the silence of the night, when one is alone."

"That's true enough, Miss Elsie. I felt fagged out after the hard time I put in aboard the brig during the two days' storm."

"Did you fire your revolver during the night?"

"I did. I shot at the mate, who was prowling around the door with the evident intention of doing some of us a mischief."

"The report awakened me, and I heard you afterward talking to my father."

"It was a good thing that a watch was kept during the first part of the night, you see, or there is no saying what might have happened to us all. I frightened him away for the night, so my failure to finish my watch, or to call Joe, amounted to nothing."

"You are very brave and good to stand between that man and us and thus invite trouble on yourselves. I am especially grateful to you for so gallantly defending me yesterday, and I shall never forget what I owe you," she said.

"That's all right, Miss Howe. There is nothing I wouldn't do for you if the occasion called for

it," replied Jack, giving her a look that brought a rich flush to her brown cheek, and caused her to drop her eyes.

The captain woke up at that moment and their brief tete-a-tete ended. While Jack engaged in conversation with Captain Howe, Elsie started in to prepare breakfast. Joe was allowed to sleep on, and when he was at length called to breakfast he got up feeling quite chipper.

Jack then told, for Joe's and Elsie's information, what occurred during the night as far as things came under his observation.

CHAPTER XI.—A Close Inspection of Coffin Rock.

The boys offered to help Elsie clean up after the meal, but the girl said she could attend to everything very easily herself, so they walked outside to consult about their plans for the day.

"My idea," said Jack, "is to take the boat and row out to the wreck. We may be able to find a good many things that will be useful to us, and no one can say how long we may have to remain on this island. The brig will break up under the first rough weather, and there is no use of anything that will benefit us going to waste."

"I agree with you," replied Joe. "The only trouble is that the mate is sure to hunt up the boat and take possession of it after we come back."

"We can't help that."

"I think the first thing we ought to do is to get some of the things stranded on the beach. We needn't bring them here right away, but we can pile them up inside the line of vegetation, so that if a storm came up quickly they wouldn't be carried away."

It was agreed to attend to that first so Jack and Joe started for the shore, keeping a wary outlook for Redriff.

When they reached the beach they saw the mate seated on the sand in the sun opposite Coffin Rock. He scowled at them, but said nothing.

They started in removing everything that seemed of any value to higher ground, and Redriff watched them.

Finally he got up and came towards them.

"A nice pair of chaps you are to go back on me," he said with a sneer.

"If you'd behaved yourself I wouldn't have interfered," returned Jack.

"What business is it of yours how I behave myself?" snarled the mate.

"It's everybody's business to defend the unprotected."

"Bah! That girl is to be my wife. You had no right to chip into my affairs."

"Not much danger of her marrying a man who treated her and her father as you did yesterday."

"What do you know about it?"

"I heard what they both said to you, and that was enough to show that you're not welcome in their society."

"When I'm rich they'll treat me differently."

"When will that be?"

"None of your business."

"You expect to find the treasure of Coffin Rock, don't you?"

"What's that? What do you know about it?"

"I know about as much as you do, and that isn't a whole lot at present."

Mark Redriff glared at him.

"Didn't I tell you that was a sea yarn?" he said.

"I know you did, but you believe it just the same."

"It's a lie."

"No, it isn't. You were over to the rock at low tide last night trying to find a clue to it."

The mate looked as if he meditated flying at the boy's throat.

"I saw you," went on Jack. "I watched you from the vegetation yonder for a good hour. You only quit when the incoming tide compelled you."

"You hound!" roared Redriff. "Spying on me, are you? I'll fix you at the first chance."

"Will you? Look out that I don't put a ball into you. Joe and I know just what to expect from you if you should get the upper hand of us, so we don't mean to give you the chance. I warn you that we are both armed. If you attempt any rascally tricks with us one of us will shoot you. I also warn you to keep away from the cabin unless you care to run the risk of a rifle ball in your body. We are all prepared for you now, and we shall watch you as long as you're on the island. That is all I've got to say to you."

"Some day I'll get square with you, Granville," said the mate, malevolently. "Then you'll be sorry for butting into my business."

"I'll take the chances. I'm not afraid of your threats. You can gamble on one thing, that you haven't the ghost of a show with Miss Howe, so if you know when you're well off you'll leave her alone in the future. Her father will be up and around before long, and then he'll look after her. He won't stand any nonsense from you. He knows now what you are, and will keep his weather eye lifting to prevent you from ever having any further communication with his daughter."

"Yah!" snarled the mate, turning on his heel and striding away.

The boys watched him out on sight, and then, taking up a load apiece of the stuff that had come ashore, walked off toward the cabin.

After dinner they lay off in the shade and took a sleep.

The boys woke up about half-past four and decided to take their boat and go to the wreck.

Jack invited Elsie to accompany them, and her father advised her to do so for a change.

So the party of three started for the little lagoon where the boat lay.

The boys found it just as they left it, and they embarked with the girl, and rowed out on the ocean, now as placid almost as a great mill pond.

They rowed completely around the rock, all three looking at it critically, but it appeared to be a solid block of stone, with scarcely a crevice anywhere on its surface.

As they couldn't see the slightest indication pointing to anything being hid about the rock they continued on their way to the wreck.

The Cormorant, or what was left of her—about half her length—was wedged in between a kind of rocky cradle, which held her on a fairly even keel, with her bows tilted upward at an angle of thirty degrees. Her foremast and bowsprit were standing as well as ever. Her galley was gone, and every vestige of the cabin section.

Jack made the painter of the boat fast to one of the exposed ribs and crawled upon to that portion of the deck which remained.

He made his way into the forecastle, where he found everything intact.

He brought out Joe's bag and his own, and carried them to the boat. Returning he went through the effects of the lost crew and brought away whatever he judged to be useful.

With the boat pretty well loaded they returned to the island, aiming for the eastern shore, on the opposite side from Coffin Rock, as a course most likely to escape observation from Mark Redriff. He wasn't in sight when they approached the shore, and the boys congratulated themselves on having made the trip.

Everything was landed and carried to the cabin, then the boys went back, filled the bottom of the boat with water, and drew it up among the vegetation. After supper it was arranged that the night watch should be kept up, as Redriff was not to be trusted, and Joe stood the first four hours from eight to midnight, when he aroused Jack, and that lad went on duty, feeling a great deal more wideawake than he had the night before.

CHAPTER XII.—Mark Redriff Leaves the Island Against His Will.

It was just as fine a night as the preceding one, with a light breeze blowing from the northwest that cooled the air off and made the hours of darkness much more endurable than the daytime.

Jack sat in the shadow of the door with his loaded revolver within reach of his right hand.

The hours sped by and nothing happened to attract his attention.

Apparently Mark Redriff had taken the hint furnished by the bullet the night before, in connection with Jack's words that he would be watched, and given up the idea of stealing a night march on the occupants of the cabin.

At four o'clock Jack awakened Joe.

"I think I'll take a walk down to the shore before turning in," he said.

He did not go toward Coffin Rock, but in the opposite direction, which was only half the distance.

As he came to a halt on the edge of the vegetation and looked along the moon-illuminated beach he was surprised to see a long native canoe, containing perhaps a dozen dusky, half-naked savages, glide in to the shore.

The natives disembarked, pulled the canoe upon the beach, and then entered the line of vegetation.

Jack was not a little startled at the advent of these strange visitors, and he hastened back to the cabin.

"Say, Joe, there's a bunch of natives on the island," he said, in some excitement.

"You don't mean it," exclaimed Joe, startled in his turn.

"I saw them land in a canoe on the beach yonder. I didn't count them, but I'll wager there's a dozen of them."

"If they're not friendly we're in for trouble. I suppose they came from that island we were looking at yesterday morning."

"Most likely they did. I can't imagine what brought them over here."

"Maybe the wreck attracted them."

How could it? They couldn't see it from their island. Besides, if they had seen it on their way they would have gone straight for it, I should think, instead of landing on the eastern shore."

"I guess you're right. If they go nosing around they are bound to come here and see this cabin. Then they'll probably take us prisoners and clean the place out."

"They won't take us prisoners so easy. We've got arms and ammunition enough to make things interesting for them."

"If they'd only catch the mate and carry him away what a blessing it would be!"

"No such luck, I guess."

"Hadn't we better arouse Captain Howe and tell him?"

"Yes. It's a pity he is confined to his bunk. I'm thinking if there is any fighting to be done it will fall on us."

"The rifle Miss Elsie has in her room will come in handy. We can do more execution with that than the revolvers."

At that moment a loud racket suddenly took place near the center of the island.

"Hear the rascals!" said Jack.

"They're kicking up a rumpus over something," replied Joe.

"Maybe they've discovered the mate."

"He has my sympathy if they have."

"I haven't any sympathy to waste on such a scoundrel."

The racket simmered down to an occasional shout and finally all was silence again.

But not for long, for the boys soon heard sounds that indicated that the natives were returning to the beach.

"I'm going back again to see what their next move will be," said Jack.

"I'd like to go, too," said Joe.

"No, you've got to stand guard here. We can't afford to take any chances."

Warning Joe to keep a sharp lookout, Jack made his way to the shore again.

He arrived in time to find the natives shoving off their boat.

The moonlight showed two of them guarding a prisoner. The prisoner was Mark Redriff, whose arms were bound behind him.

When the canoe was in the water, he was forced into it, the bunch of them embarked off and began to paddle toward the distant island.

"If this is your finish, Mark Redriff, you're not any more than was coming to you," muttered Jack, rather pleased to have the rascal off the island.

After watching the canoe almost out of sight, Jack returned to the cabin to tell the news to Joe.

"So they've got him," cried Joe, with an exultant ring to his voice. "They've done us a good service. I hope they'll keep him, or make bakalo of him if they're cannibals."

"I guess they're not cannibals," said Jack. "That kind of business has been nearly stamped out in these seas. Still, I believe cannibals exist on some of these island yet."

"I don't care what they are as long as they keep the mate away and leave us alone," grinned Joe. "We'll have a chance then to hunt for the treasure without having that rascal butting in on us."

"We're rid of him for a while at any rate, so

there is no need of your standing watch for the rest of the morning. There's no one on the island now to disturb us," said Jack, "so come on, let's turn in."

Elsie was up and had breakfast under way when the boys opened their eyes and saw that it was broad daylight once more. The captain was also awake. He declared that his injured leg was feeling much improved, and he guessed that he would soon be on his feet again.

"I've got a great piece of news for you," said Jack, after he and Joe had made a rough toilet outside.

"What is it?" asked the captain, while Elsie paused in her work and looked at the boy with interest.

"This morning, about four o'clock, the island was visited by a canoe full of natives from the big island yonder," replied Jack.

"Did you see them?" asked Captain Howe.

"I did. I was down at the eastern shore when they landed."

"Then we may expect a visit from them soon, I suppose."

"No; they have gone away again, back to their island. They didn't stay more than half an hour on the island."

Elsie looked relieved and so did her father.

"They did us a good service by coming here," went on Jack.

"What kind of a service?" asked the captain, curiously.

"They captured Mark Redriff and carried him off."

"Do you mean that?" cried the captain.

"It's a fact. I saw him a prisoner in their hands, with his arms bound."

This was certainly surprising news for Captain Howe and his daughter, and secretly they were pleased to be rid of the scoundrelly mate. They talked the matter over during breakfast, and all agreed that it was a great satisfaction to have Mark Redriff off the island.

"If it's all the same to you, Jack, we'll hunt for that treasure this morning as soon as the tide permits," said Joe.

"I'm with you. We can't get on the job any too quick to suit me," returned his friend.

Accordingly they started for the western shore as soon as the meal was over.

CHAPTER XIII.—The Spark of Light.

The tide was pretty high when the boys reached the beach in front of Coffin Rock, so they had to defer their examination of the base of the rock until it receded. They employed their time in carrying the stuff they had collected along the shore to the cabin. They stacked it outside and covered it with a piece of sailcloth. After that they went to the eastern shore, floated their boat and rowed around to the other side in it. By this time the tide was out. Beaching the boat they walked out to the rock and began their examination. They spent more than an hour poking around the great stone, but couldn't discover the slightest indication that pointed to anything being hidden there. They found, contrary to their ideas, that Coffin Rock was not a detached stone set up in the sands of the shore, but part of a

big rock, the foundation of which extended for many yards around, and ran far down into the sea. There was not a spot in this base where a treasure could have been buried, unless a hole for it had first been blasted out, and no such thing had ever happened to Coffin Rock.

The tide was now beginning to rise so they gave up their search, rowed their boat around into the lagoon, and returned to the cabin to report the non-success of their efforts to find the alleged chest of gold. Late that afternoon they strolled down to the shore again and sat down on the beach facing Coffin Rock.

"We'll get back to 'Frisco as poor as we left," said Joe, digging his heel into the wet sand.

"Probably," relied Jack; "but there's no saying when we'll get there. We've got to be taken off this island first."

"I'm not worrying about that. A vessel is bound to come along some time."

While they were talking they were joined by Elsie, who had no fear of walking out alone now that she knew that Redriff was off the island.

"Have you given up your treasure hunt?" she asked.

"No; but I'm afraid it's got us beaten to a standstill," said Jack.

"You can't find a single indication of it?"

"Not the ghost of one."

"Have you hunted the base of the rock all over?"

"Yes, and found it a mass of solid rock, as I told you at dinner."

"You're disappointed, aren't you?"

"I should say I am. I was sure that the gold was to be found."

"Father says he's not surprised at your failure, for he doesn't believe that any treasure was buried there by a pirate. He says that nine-tenths of the stories about buried treasure are frauds."

"Well," said Jack, "I've had the satisfaction of coming to Coffin Rock at any rate, if there is no treasure around it, and I'm going to do something that I'll bet no one else has done."

"What's that?" asked Joe.

"I'm going to climb to the top of it."

"What for?"

"Just to be able to boast that I was up there."

"How are you going to do it? It's a great sight easier to get up a cocoanut tree than clamber to the top of that rock."

"What's the matter with throwing a rope around the upper part in a sort of loop, and while you hang on to one end I could climb the other?"

"You might be able to do that. You'll have to wait till the tide is out."

"Of course. We've got lots of time to do it."

The sun was now close to the distant horizon and Coffin Rock threw a long shadow up the beach. The point of it rested against the base of a large stone on the edge of the line of vegetation. Jack noticed it, but the circumstance did not interest him any. As it would be dark in a few minutes the three young people got up and started for the cabin. Jack was in the rear, and as he was passing the stone he saw something bright sticking out of the sand. He picked it up, looked at it and saw that it was a gold Spanish coin. It bore the date of 1811. He was on the point of calling out to his companions and showing them the coin when he changed his mind,

dropped the piece of money into his pocket, and went on. He was unusually silent and thoughtful that evening, and the others attributed the fact to his disappointment about the treasure of Coffin Rock. Joe was also disappointed, for he had indulged in a great many air-castles in which the treasure figured.

He had calculated that Jack and himself would return to 'Frisco a couple of boy Monte Cristos. As things looked now there seemed precious small chance of his dream ever being realized. Next morning Jack was up at sunrise. The others were still asleep. Without waking Joe he left the cabin and walked to the beach.

"That old Spanish coin never came here by accident," he said to himself. "And it didn't come here lately, either, for coins of that date are not in circulation. Somebody who was here forty or fifty years ago lost that coin in the sand or else it is an indication that there actually is, or was, a real treasure of Coffin Rock after all. In the sand at the base of that stone where I found the coin would be a first-class place to bury a chest of gold, or anything else that a person wanted to put out of sight. I noticed last evening at sunset that Coffin Rock threw its shadow right up to the base of the stone. The shadow didn't go an inch further. It just rested at the point where the stone was stuck in the sand. Could there be anything in that? It's suggestive, at any rate. I think it will be worth my while to dig at the base of that stone and see if anything comes of it."

The sun was shining full on Coffin Rock when Jack reached the shore. The tide was at its lowest ebb, too. He got down on his hands and knees and began turning up the sand at the base of the stone with his fingers, eager to see if there were any more coins there. While in this position he happened to cast his eyes toward Coffin Rock on a line with the water. He saw something glistening in the sunlight like a tiny star. He rose up to get a better look, but could see nothing of the glistening object. After moving around to various angles without result, it struck him that the flash could only be seen from the position he was in at first.

So down he went on the sand again and looked. There was no sparkle.

"It must have been the sun shining on a small pool of water which had collected in a slight fissure of the rock," he mused. "It amounts to nothing."

He resumed his digging in the same posture he had originally assumed, with his head close to the ground. Again he glanced toward the base of Coffin Rock and once more he saw the glittering speck. He stopped digging and watched it. It seemed like a speck of burnished copper. Jack moved his head a little forward and the speck vanished. Resuming his position he saw it again.

"I wonder what in thunder that is?" he asked himself. "It can't be water for it's just on a level with the sea, and the water about it has a different kind of sparkle. I'm going to investigate it."

He took careful note of a black patch on the rock a few inches above it, then marked a line in the sand pointing directly at it. Having done that he rose to his feet and taking his place in front of the line he walked straight for Coffin Rock.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Treasure of Coffin Rock.

Splashing through the few inches of water he kept his eye on the dark spot he had noticed about the star of light. It took him but a few minutes to reach the base of the rock. Plumping himself right down on his knees in some twelve inches of water, he placed the forefinger of his left hand on the dark spot and then looked just above the level of the water for the thing that so brilliantly reflected the sun's rays. He found it, apparently the head of a copper nail, and it was so small that under ordinary circumstances he never would have noticed it.

"Only a nail-head," muttered Jack, rubbing his finger over it, "and I thought it might prove a clue to the—good gracious!"

He had pressed hard upon the head of the seeming nail, and the exclamation was drawn from him by the opening inward of a cunningly contrived door, just above his head. The door was about a foot wide by two feet high, and was operated by copper hinges, which hadn't a speck of rust on them, showing that it had been so nicely adjusted. Jack unconsciously removed his finger from the copper nail, whereupon the door closed noiselessly, and though the boy peered closely he could not detect the outline of the door.

"Great Christopher!" cried Jack. "I've struck the treasure of Coffin Rock at last."

The boy caught his breath and stared hard at the rock so excited was he by his accidental discovery of the secret. Of course, he was all eagerness to see if the treasure was really inside of the rock, and he looked down for the copper nail. It seemed to have disappeared. That caused him to gasp with a kind of consternation, until he saw by the position of the small black patch, which was really the dried and blackened remains of some marine fungus which had adhered to the rock, that the tide had risen at least an inch since he came there. As the small copper-headed nail had been on a level with the surface when he first located it, naturally it was now out of sight under the water.

Knowing pretty near where it should be, Jack felt around for some moments in search of it. He couldn't tell it by the feel from the rock itself so he kept pressing all around the spot. Suddenly the secret door opened again. As soon as he released the spring it commenced to close once more. Jack placed the palm of his right hand against it and held it open. The sun shining right into the opening illuminated the interior. What the depth of it was Jack was unable to say, as all he could see was a layer of small fat-looking bags, closely wedged together.

A second layer extended back of the space necessary to accommodate the swing of the door. The bags were made of canvas, all about one size, and very handy to lift, each being tied at the mouth with a piece of spun yarn. That the bags contained coined money there could be no doubt, for Jack could see many of the round impressions showing against the canvas. It would be hard to describe his feelings at that moment as he stared with bated breath at the array of bags that undoubtedly represented the treasure of Coffin Rock. He paid no attention to the fact that the water was fast rising about him, and was already within a few inches of the lower edge of the door. At

length he woke up, as it were, and grabbed a bag of coin with his left hand while holding the door back with his right.

"Yes, it's money—real money," he muttered delightedly. "If it's all gold I'll be as rich as a mine owner. And to think I found it just by accident."

He tried to stuff the bag in one of his pockets, and then he saw how high the sea had risen, and how in a few minutes it would be lapping over into the hidden treasure hold and wetting the bags that were as dry as tinder from being so long hermetically sealed up in that air-tight enclosure.

"I can't do anything until the tide goes down again, hours hence," he breathed. "However, I know the secret now and can open the door any time that conditions are favorable. I'll take as many bags as I can carry, and then return to the cabin. Lord, what a story I'll have to tell, and how Joe's eyes will open when he sees the coin!"

Thus speaking he hauled out six bags, one after another, and let them drop into the water in front of his knees. Then he released the door and it shut to as noiselessly as before, leaving not a crevice to tell of its existence. Reaching down in the two feet of water, Jack recovered the bags, but the six proved, small as they were, to be no light weight. With them in his arms he made his way to the beach, passed on through the line of vegetation and walked slowly toward the cabin. When he passed into the clearing he saw Joe standing at the door, sunning himself.

"Hello, Jack! Where have you been?" cried Joe. "And what have you got there—a mess of shellfish?"

"No; these bags contain money, and I've found the treasure of Coffin Rock."

"What!" gasped Joe, looking as if he was going to have a fit. "You've found the treasure?"

"Sure as you live, I have. Feast your eyes on these six bags and see how they strike you. There must be fifty, perhaps a hundred, more where these came from, and every one just as full of money as these."

"Jumping ginger!" cried Joe, seizing a bag out of his friend's arms and staring at it eagerly. "Gosh! It is full of money for I can see the print of the coins. You've found the treasure."

"Yes."

"Where? Not in the base of Coffin Rock, I'll swear."

"Yes, in the base of Coffin Rock, in about the spot mentioned by the mate of the Golden Magnet."

"Why, how could you find it there? That is all solid rock."

"Not quite solid, for the hole is there that contains the treasure."

"Well, it's somewhere under water for these bags are all wet."

"They weren't wet when I took them out of their resting place. I had to drop them in the water, as I could only handle them with one hand. I had to hold the secret door open with the other."

"And you say there are fifty or more bags full of money like these?" said Joe eagerly.

"Yes."

"How many are you going to give me? Or do I get any at all seeing as you have discovered the treasure yourself?" said Joe, his face dropping a little.

"Sure you'll get some. We'll decide how it shall be divided later on when it's all in our possession."

"Come, boys, breakfast is waiting," cried Elsie, inside.

The boys walked inside and found Captain Howe sitting up with his game leg off the bunk, which showed it was ever so much better.

"Captain, and you, Miss Elsie, gaze on these bags and smack your lips. They're full of money."

"Full of money!" exclaimed the girl, in a tone of amazement, while her father stared at Jack and the big bags.

"Yes. This is a small portion of the treasure of Coffin Rock, which I found this morning," replied Jack.

The captain was dumbfounded. He could hardly believe that the treasure actually had existence in fact. To prove that it was no sham Jack cut open one of the bags at once, and a heap of more or less worn gold pieces was revealed. After that there was no longer any doubt about Jack's discovery. All three were eager to learn the full particulars of how he had found out the hiding-place of the treasure and while they ate breakfast he told them. Of course, Joe was eager to rush off to see the treasure trove.

"Hold your horses, Joe. It's out of sight under the water by this time. At the next ebb we'll go there and bring the whole treasure to the cabin," said Jack.

So Joe had to curb his impatience. The money in the bags was counted and it was found that each bag held just 150 golden coin, the value of which Captain Howe computed roughly at \$10. At that estimate each bag held \$1,500 and the six bags \$9,000.

"If there are fifty bags more, and all contain gold, you'll be worth \$80,000, Jack," said the captain.

"It's my opinion there are more than fifty bags still in the hole," replied the boy.

"Every additional bag will make you \$1,500 richer."

Jack, Joe and Elsie went down to the shore to look at Coffin Rock, which now possessed a new interest for them. The tide was way up, so, of course, nothing could be done toward getting at the treasure. Jack figured that it would be down late in the afternoon, and he and Joe waited impatiently for the time to come. At last the tide went out, and the boys were on hand with a couple of bags in which they intended to remove the treasure. Jack found the copper nail, as he called it, and pointed it out to Joe. Pressing it, the door flew open and revealed the interior to his friend. A few minutes later Jack began taking out the bags with one hand and dumping them into the bag held by Joe while he kept the door back with the other. There proved to be 100 bags altogether, representing an estimated value of \$150,000. Jack told Joe that he could have \$25,000, and he presented \$15,000 to Captain Howe and \$10,000 to Elsie.

"One hundred thousand is enough for me," he said, with a cheerful laugh.

Now that he had found the treasure, Jack was eager to leave the island, and the others were just as anxious; but that was something over which they had no control. Indeed four months passed away before a vessel came near enough to

the island to take notice of their signals, and during that time Jack and Elsie grew very fond of each other. Captain Howe saw how the wind blew, and offered no opposition to the course of their love affair, so that in due time they became engaged with his consent. At the end of four months the party was taken off the island by a vessel bound for San Francisco, and in due time they and the treasure reached the golden city of the West.

Jack was received with open arms by his mother, who had given him up for dead, while his step-father adopted a different attitude toward him when he found out that the bay was worth a fortune in gold. He asserted his right to take charge of the money, as Jack's legal guardian, but the boy wouldn't have it. He placed the money in a safe deposit box and gave the key to Elsie, so that his mother's husband was unable to get hold of it. The events herein described took place thirty-five years ago, and Jack and his friend Joe are men in middle life in business together in San Francisco. Of course, Jack married Elsie, and they have quite a family of strapping boys and pretty girls in their Van Ness Avenue home, all of whom are never tired of hearing about how their parents met on a South Sea island, and there discovered the treasure of Coffin Rock.

Next week's issue will contain "MONEY MAKER MACK; or, THE BOY WHO SMASHED A WALL STREET 'RING.'"

CHOOSING HER COMPANY

"Mother," said little Evelyn, "may I go out and play with the other little children now?"

"You may play with the little girls, but not with the boys, for they are too rough."

"But, mother, if I find a nice smooth little boy, can I play with him?"

—Michigan Technic.

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The Wall Street Hoodoo

— or —

The Boy the Brokers Feared

By Gaston Garne

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XXII

How Bob Helped a Good Man.

Bob looked at him and said:

"What's the matter with you? Can't you see the hoodoo in the way I trapped him?"

"Well, I can't say I do. But hoodoo or not, you worked the game well, and that's just the same."

Of course it created a tremendous excitement in Wall Street, and the papers had a flaming account of it the next morning. The comments of many great financiers were printed, too, and many of them characterized him as a most remarkable young man.

Of course every man who has a bank account leaves his signature with the banker, but very few had thought of making a signature to a check convey information to the cashier. After that nearly every one of them adopted Bob's plan, not only to catch a would-be robber, but to assist the cashier in detecting a forgery.

Bob had provided against that also by telling the cashier, after his bank account had swollen to large figures, that he would cease to dot the i in the name Whiddon. Naturally a forger would dot it, and thus he would be caught.

It was very simple, yet effective.

In an interview with a reporter Bob stated that hereafter he would always keep a revolver in his desk, and that if any other fellow wanted to get his money by other than fair means he would be running a great risk.

For more than a week Bob's office was crowded during business hours by people who merely wanted to see him and talk with him.

He was really doing no business as a broker, but the typewriter was kept quite busy doing work for others.

Of course Bob and the bank people appeared against the prisoners, and they were in a fair way of spending a long term of years in State's prison.

One of them frankly admitted that the young hoodoo had been too much for them.

"We thought we had a soft snap of it," he remarked. "When he signed the check it seemed to be a cool business transaction, and we never suspected a trap. We played a desperate game and lost, and I guess we've got to stand for it. He is the youngest Wall Street operator that we know of, but he's as sharp as the oldest one among them."

Mrs. Sisson came down the next day to congratulate him, and again offered him any amount of money that he might need for speculation.

She begged him to take out a license to do a general brokerage business, but he refused saying that he had made up his mind never to do a business of that kind, as no man could foresee the ups and downs of stocks during the daily speculation.

He insisted that his plan was the safest, to wait till other people paved the way by booming stocks through corners and syndicates, but womanlike, she insisted he was born under a lucky star and that success would attend all his ventures.

Still she could not move him, and really she admired him for his firmness.

After that the brokers feared him more than ever. It was impossible for them to keep him in ignorance of what was going on, not only on the streets, but on the floor of the Stock Exchange.

Many months passed before he saw an opportunity to make another deal, but it came about when a syndicate was formed to corner a certain stock, and a watch was set on him, but it did no good.

He bought many thousand shares of the stock and laid in wait for the syndicate.

When it had reached as high a figure as he thought was possible for it to go he unloaded on them, with the usual result that many brokers were badly squeezed, while he came out many thousand dollars ahead of the game.

He had bought a fine residence for his mother and sisters.

Mrs. Burwald had secured legal separation from her husband, and a few months later she sued him for an absolute divorce, and in due time she was freed entirely from him.

Jennie Rogers, of course, bought a home for her mother, and she, too, kept a carriage and horses.

Bob tried to persuade her to keep out of Wall Street, but she declared she wouldn't retire until he did, stating that she cared nothing for society.

She was driven down to the office every morning in her carriage, and it came for her at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Frequently she gave rides to friends among the typewriter girls.

She was very kind to all of them. One of them particularly she loved as a sister. Her parents were very poor, and the father was a carpenter.

One day the young typewriter came down to the office, crying, and said that her mother was very ill.

"Well," said Jennie, "you go home and stay with her, and I'll do your work in your absence."

The girl went back, and for three long weeks Jennie did her typewriting and sent her salary to her.

Then on evenings, accompanied by Bob, she visited her at her little home.

There, of course, she became acquainted with the carpenter.

Bob saw that he was an honest, steady worker, and a competent one.

One evening he said to him that if he was competent to take a contract he would back him financially.

"Why, I'm fully competent to do it. When my boss takes a contract he generally turns the work over to me. But let me tell you it is a

mighty hard matter for a man without money to get a contract. A contractor has to give bond, and that's what I can't do."

"Go ahead and get the contract and I'll furnish the money to carry the work on and will go on your bond."

The man was fortunate in putting in a bid for a contract to build an entire block of frame cottages in Brooklyn.

When the property owner inquired about bond the carpenter told him that he could give any bond that he wanted, and that he had a financial backer who would advance all the money needed in carrying on the work. He got the contract and cleared about seven thousand dollars on it.

That set him on his feet.

Bob got back every dollar he had put up for him, and felt very happy over having assisted a good many in getting a start in life.

CHAPTER XXIII

Bob Again Gets In a Little Hoodoo Work.

One day, when there was great excitement in the Stock Exchange, Hennessey rushed into Bob's office, saying:

"Bob, I consider myself worth three-quarters of a million. I own a good deal of unincumbered real estate, but just now I need \$100,000 in cash to save myself from a loss of about \$60,000. Can you let me have it? I can give you real estate security."

"I don't need it, sir," said Bob. "You've stood by me, and I'll stand by you." He wrote a check for \$100,000 and went over to the bank in person and had it certified.

It saved Hennessey from a big loss, for he was on the point of being badly squeezed.

Hennessey paid the money back in a week, and Bob would charge him no interest.

He was generous enough to tell the story to Bob's credit.

Other brokers had tried in vain to borrow from him, even on the best security, and they had gotten the idea in their heads that he was a heartless youth who would let his best friends be crushed financially.

On another occasion, when he came into the office, he found a typewriter girl talking with Jennie.

When she saw him, the girl seemed to be agitated and considerably confused.

He knew the girl by sight, but was not acquainted with her.

She worked in an office two floors above his.

"Bob," said Jennie, "this is Eva McClure. She works in Broker Baldwin's office, two flights up."

Bob extended his hand to her, saying he was glad to know her, as he had seen her many a time in the building.

"Bob," said Jennie, laughing, "she is in the same fix that I was when I asked you to hoodoo a young man who was bothering me with his attentions."

"Oh, indeed!" and he looked at her and laughed.

She was a modest girl, and Jennie had to tell her story for her.

She was being bothered by an assistant book-

keeper in another office who was old enough to be her father.

She had tried every way possible to get rid of him, but he met her at every turn, and seemed to be lying in wait for her, offering attentions. He would follow her to the street car and ride with her and pay her fare and invite her out to luncheon, until she was on the eve of giving up her situation in order to get rid of him.

"She asked me if I couldn't persuade you to hoodoo him."

Bob laughed, and the girl was confused that she was almost on the eve of bursting into tears.

"Oh, don't let it worry you," he said. "That hoodoo business is the biggest fake in Wall Street. I have no more power to hoodoo another than a cat has."

"How is it, then," she asked, "that so many people call you the Wall Street hoodoo? I know there are a lot of people here who believe you can put a spell on anybody you please."

"Well, it is only superstition. But I'll do what I can to help you. I'll try to make him believe I have put a spell on him, and maybe he'll stub his toe and get a fall or something will happen to him, and I'll get the credit for it. When you see him again just tell him that I'm after him, and have cast a spell over him. But tell me, please, have you asked him to keep away from you?"

"Yes, a dozen times, but he laughs and says that it is impossible, that I am a magnet that attracts him. He seems to be a kind-hearted man, but all the other girls tease me so that if I can't get rid of him I'll have to give up my position."

"Don't you give up your position. When you quit work this afternoon, come down to the office and ride up home with Jennie and me."

The girl looked at Jennie inquisitively, and the latter said:

"Yes; come down and we'll bring you back in the morning, and you can go out to lunch with us, too."

"Oh, my, I don't want to put you to that trouble and expense."

"Never mind about that," said Bob. "I am willing to spend a little money to have some fun with him."

So that day, after business hours, she came down to Bob's office.

The persistent lover was at the foot of the stairs on the street, waiting for her, and Jennie's carriage was in front.

She went down with Jennie and Bob and passed the bookkeeper, and Bob assisted both of them into the carriage.

The man seemed to be astonished and stood there until the carriage drove away.

Then he went his way, wondering what it meant.

The next morning he was at the entrance of the building when the Rogers' carriage came up, and she entered the building with them without even looking at him.

At noon time he was in the corridor waiting to invite her to lunch with him.

She hurried past him and ran down two flights to join Bob and Jennie.

(To be continued)

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 21, 1927

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

BOTTOMLEY, 5 YEARS IN JAIL, OPENS PRISON REFORM FIGHT

After spending the last five years in prison for swindling thousands of persons by putting in his own pocket the money subscribed for Government securities, Horatio Bottomley announces in the Weekly Dispatch his intention of reforming the British prison system. He also intends to "do something to relieve the dismal monotony of this age of mediocrity."

He has written a poem, not yet published, which he hopes will end the "hideous things" in the prison system, as Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Jail" brought reforms thirty years ago. He calls his poem the "Ballad of Maidstone Jail." Bottomley is planning a lecture tour in which he would appear on the platform in prison garb. He says \$500,000 had been promised him for founding a newspaper. His old hold on large sections of the uneducated public seems unbroken, judging by the demonstrations of the villagers near his Sussex home who cheer outside his house and who have decorated their homes with flags in celebration of his coming home.

Many people, despite court evidence of his countless financial frauds, still believe he is the champion of the under dog and has been persecuted for being so. Bottomley, who was a Member of Parliament when sent to prison, characteristically suggests that every member be made to serve three years of imprisonment. "Many of them deserve it," he has said.

ADVOCATES YEARLY TESTS FOR AUTO DRIVERS

Asserting that examination would show a higher percentage of defects in automobile drivers than has been shown by the examination of motor cars, Dr. Charles S. Prest, Secretary of the Brooklyn Tuberculosis and Health Association, proposed in a statement recently that every operator be examined at least once a year. At the same time he declared that a high percentage

of the children in Brooklyn and Queens going to school for the first time this year are physically handicapped.

Doctor Prest commented on the report of Charles A. Harnett, State Commissioner of Motor Vehicles, to the effect that the recent inspection of 400,000 automobiles revealed the fact that 39 per cent. were mechanically defective. He said that the owners and operators of these cars should also be examined to determine their physical fitness and that if this was done the percentage of defects would be much higher.

"A recent health examination of some 3,600 children who are to enter Brooklyn and Queens schools for the first time this coming week disclosed a far more serious situation," he continued. "Of these 3,600 children more than 63 per cent. were found to have physical defects considered serious enough to require medical or dental attention. In other words almost two-thirds of the children entering our public schools for the first time this year are handicapped from the start to a lesser or greater extent by physical defects which retard their normal progress."

LAUGHS

OUI, OUI

"I hear Emily is just back from two years of study in Paris."

"Yes, she's a real Parasite now."

—Barnard Barnacle.

AT OUR CHURCH

"We 'ave matins at our church."

"That's nothing. We have linoleum up the aisle at ours."

—Stanford Chaparral.

VERY APPARENT

"Do you know that I have the soul of an artist?"

"I knew you painted the minute I looked at your face."

—Northwest'n Purple Parrot.

TAKING HER WITH HIM

"I could die dancing," he exclaimed as he walked over her fee.

"Maybe so," she agreed, "but we don't need to make a death pact out of it."

—Pitt Panther.

"Don't yez know yit how t' drive a nail widout mashin' yer t'umb?" gleefully inquired the hod carrier of the injured carpenter. "No," retorted the carpenter, hotly, "an' neither do you." "Shure, Oi do," returned the hod carrier. "Hold the hammer wid both hands."

Spoony shop assistant to smart young lady trying on a hat before the glass: "Don't I wish I was a looking glass!" Smart young lady: "Yes, perhaps you'd get more girls to look at you then." Shop assistant collapses.

Master Lonnie Mills, son of Mr. J. T. Mills, of Pageland, S. C., caught two hawks in a steel trap recently. He brought one to town and it measured 4 feet and 5 inches from tip to tip. The other was almost as large.

The Maniac's Mistake

Never shall I forget my first encounter with a maniac. At college I had stood at the head of the class in neurology, or nervous diseases, of which insanity is one.

In fact, I had received a medal for a supposed excellent description or diagnosis of the stages passed through by a sane mind in verging toward insanity. I always imagined I should be cool and collected in the presence of a human being so afflicted, but, ah! how sadly I was mistaken, as you shall see.

I graduated in June, and having worked hard up to the very day of graduation I determined to pass the summer in the country. So, after a few days spent with my father and mother, I packed my trunk and went to Tarrytown on the Hudson.

I was walking on "the hill," the prettiest section of the village, in the cool of the evening, when I noticed two men approaching me.

One was young, not more than twenty-one or two, with a handsome face and hair clustering about his head in ringlets. He was elegantly dressed, evidently belonging to a family of wealth. The other was an older man, more plainly dressed and seemed to have charge of the younger.

As we drew nearer I divined the reason, for I caught a glimpse of the restless eyes and settled melancholy on the young man's face. He was not in his right mind. Harmless now, and generally, I guessed, but subject to occasional violent fits which necessitated a man to keep watch over him.

We were within several feet of each other before the young man appeared to notice me.

Then I saw him start, saw his face change its color for a livid hue, and between his tightly-closed teeth he sucked in a long breath with a peculiar hissing, disagreeable sound.

"Quiet, Charlie, quiet!" said his keeper soothingly, and then, glancing at me, I saw that he gave a start of surprise.

Again drawing another of those long, suppressed breaths, I saw his hands slowly rise, saw his fingers begin to twitch convulsively, to writhe and squirm with that strange, snaky motion so common among demented persons.

What could it mean? How had I roused his anger?

"Sh! Charlie, control yourself," again said his keeper, and unseen by his charge motioned me energetically to hurry along out of sight.

Thinking it best to comply, I passed by. A suffocated cry of anger caused me to turn and look back, and I saw Charlie only prevented by the keeper's embrace from springing upon me.

Never shall I forget the look of fiendish rage, of malevolence, stamped on that face—handsome in repose, but now horrible in its distortion!

Somewhat alarmed, as I will frankly confess, I lost no time in getting out of sight, and just at dusk returned to my boarding place, a large house almost meriting the name of hotel.

I had not been in my room more than a quarter of an hour when I was informed that a person was below who wished to see me. On his being shown up I recognized the maniac's keeper.

"Sir," he said, and his voice actually trembled

as he spoke, "your resemblance to another man nearly cost you your life."

"How so?"

"You resemble in a marked degree the man who blighted Charles Leroy's life and unsettled his reason. He was deceived by the resemblance and but for my timely intervention and your leaving at the right juncture he would have torn you limb from limb."

"What is the history of the case?" I inquired, not without curiosity.

"Charles Leroy loved a woman, fair as an angel, but false as could be. She encouraged him to believe she loved him in return, but she was only playing with him. Of a sanguine, passionate, hopeful nature, Leroy was translated to a heavenly existence, and when told that this woman encouraged other men he would not believe it; she told him that it was untrue, and that was enough. Like a thunderbolt falling from a clear sky the truth at last became known to him. He went to her house at once and she mocked his love, laughed at his impassioned entreaties and dismissed him with the cruel words: 'Go, sir, or I will call my intended husband and have you put out.'

"You see, he had importuned her until she was beginning, perhaps, to become aware of her perfidy.

"Leroy then understood her character for the first time. He arose and rushed away in a towering passion. He remained housed closely after that, a settled melancholy descending on him.

"They tried to rouse him, but in vain. He began to act strangely, but they little imagined that he was actually mad until the day the fair but false one was married. In the middle of the marriage service Leroy rushed into the church, and, upbraiding the woman, fired again and again upon the man who had—as he believed—won her from him, but who had in reality been engaged to her before she met Leroy.

"The man fortunately escaped with his life, so wildly the shots were fired.

"Leroy was taken home and I was engaged as companion and keeper for him. He afterward quieted down and is generally tractable unless he hears either of their names spoken, when he gets in a violent fit. Consequently we are careful that they shall never be alluded to in his presence.

"This couple lately returned to Tarrytown to spend the summer, and I am satisfied that he had some knowledge of it, though he cunningly hides it from me.

"Now, sir, I would warn you to be careful. He never goes out save at the hour you met us, and by avoiding the hill at that time an unpleasant scene may be avoided."

"Poor fellow!" I could not help saying. "And can nothing be done for him?"

"Nothing. Money has been spent without stint, the best physicians employed, but his malady remains incurable. But I must go. You, sir, will be careful to avoid a meeting, for his sake, for your own?"

"I will," I answered, and bade the man good-night.

As I was rambling around the next day my steps led me to the monument erected on the spot where Andre was captured by the patriots while on his way to New York after the meeting with that traitor to his country, Benedict Arnold.

I saw several ladies there, and was surprised by hearing one of them call me by name.

A quick glance at her, and then I exclaimed:

"Ah! I am delighted at this encounter, Miss—But hold, I believe you are married, and I should consequently say Mrs. ——" and I paused.

"Brooks," she said laughingly.

In former years we had known each other intimately, but had drifted apart as I plunged into study and gave up society, and for three years past I had not seen her.

"You must come and see me," she said, after having introduced her companion. "Make one of our present party and return to tea. My husband is in the city, but will be home on a late train, and I would very much like you to meet."

"Why?" I inquired.

"I think you'll recognize each other," she replied with a light laugh. Her words puzzled me at the moment, but I soon forgot them, for the present, at least.

I accepted the invitation and went to her house to tea.

Having shown me into a room where I could enjoy a cigar, my hostess excused herself while she went to dress for the evening.

I took a chair, and fell into a reverie presently, interrupted finally by the sound of stealthy steps.

Then came a shrill, elfish cry, and the maniac—for he it was behind me—flung a strong cloth over my head, and, exerting his strength, pulled it tight and hard over my face, strangling my cries and suffocating me.

Oh, the agonies of the moment which followed!

He had taken me at a disadvantage, and I could not budge from the arm-chair.

I flung up my hands and tried to tear away the cloth, but it was useless.

I struggled—oh, how hard!—when I felt my brain reeling, when I felt excruciating pains of suffocation dart through my chest. But—the pall of insensibility—perhaps of death—settled over my brain in spite of all I could do, and the world drifted from my grasp.

What happened then I don't know, but I recovered consciousness presently to find myself lying on the floor, my hands and feet bound tightly together, while the house was filled with yells and cries of fright, terror, dismay and fiendish exultation.

A moment later I saw Mrs. Brooks dragged into the room by Charles Leroy, on whose face rested the expression I had seen there the evening before.

"Ha, ha! Come on—come on, you false-hearted woman! Come and see what shall happen! Ha, ha! You murdered my love, now I shall slay yours!"

"Mercy—mercy! Help—help!"

"Hush up! Why do you cry for help? None dare come!"

Shrinking and screaming the lady was dragged near me.

She was the fair woman who had driven him crazy, and it was her husband the maniac mistook me for.

That explained her words: "I think you'll recognize each other!"

"Prepare for death!" hissed the maniac, turning his lurid, vengeful eyes on me. "Ah! Fiend, you robbed me of her, but you shall die for it. And

I have brought her that she might see you die! Revenge—revenge!"

With an appalling shriek he forced her into a chair so placed that she must see what passed, and then, brandishing the knife, he faced me.

Cruel as the tiger who sports with his victim, the maniac stooped a little, and, waving the hand clutching the knife slowly before my vision, he crept toward me like a beast of prey.

Heaven only knows what I suffered during the next minute.

It was a relief even when he bounded at me with a demoniac yell, with knife raised to strike.

I saw the flashing blade descend.

Then I uttered a cry of pain.

He had aimed at my heart, but, missing it, the blade entered my shoulder.

He now flung himself upon me, gnashing his teeth, and once again raised the blood-stained blade.

I closed my eyes, and—

It was perfectly terrible to hear the savage yells and curses which followed.

His keeper had at that moment rushed in and arrested the murderous hand of the maniac in time to save my life. In a second other assistance came; Leroy was overpowered and I released.

I rose to my feet, bathed in perspiration, just as Mr. Brooks entered the room.

He was near enough like me to have been my brother, and I no longer wondered at the maniac's mistake.

Poor fellow!

He died in an asylum shortly after.

That Mrs. Brooks does regret, and will regret to her dying day, the coquetry which crazed Leroy I am sure.

But—I never desire to see her again.

HINDU MYSTIC CONTROLS RADIO AND ELECTRIC LIGHTS BY TELEPATHY

How by concentration of the mind the valves of a super five-valve set can be stopped working, and how by a similar process they can be made to function unconnected with the accumulators, was shown at a private seance the other day by Swami Yogi-Devji, a young ascetic from northern India who has been staying in Bombay for the whole of August. He is training a few disciples in the Yoga school for developing psychic faculties.

He said he was attracted one day by the electric light, and wanted to see whether it could be dimmed by will power. He exerted his strength and found the light growing dimmer and dimmer until the bulb ceased to glow. He tried the other way, and found that he could light it again by a similar effort of will.

Then he turned his attention to the wireless, and found he could do similar things with that. He is now experimenting with another side of the wireless. He says that, just as voices are heard and photos transmitted over the radio long distances, so smell, taste and touch from Chicago can be felt in Bombay. The smell of cardamoms, for example, chewed by a man speaking on the telephone, can be transmitted to the listener at the other end. By Yoga power, without any material assistance, one can get the impression of touch, voice, vision, taste and smell at a distance of thousands of miles, he claims.

GOOD READING.

BARBER SHOP OPENED FOR CHINESE WOMEN

A barber shop for Chinese women, the first of its kind in Shanghai, has been opened under the auspices of the Chinese Y. W. C. A.

According to the announcement of the opening of the new "shop," it has been made necessary "to meet the increasing demand on the part of Chinese women who have bobbed hair for women barbers."

Two men barbers were retained when the shop first opened to train women barbers. They have since been replaced by women.

SWEDISH RECEIVERS WILL GIVE MUSIC TO TURKISH LISTENERS

Thanks to the latest important Constantinople success of the Swedish export industry, the peculiar Turkish radio music will be made accessible to radio listeners in Turkey through Swedish receivers. This piece of news has been conveyed to the Swedish press by Hyalmar de Laval of the Baltic Radio Company, a Swedish concern, who has just returned from Turkey. Mr. de Laval has concluded a favorable contract with the Turkish company, Societe Anonyme Turque de Telephone Sans Fils, which possesses the radio monopoly in Turkey. According to this contract, the Turkish company undertakes to sell exclusively for five years the apparatus of the Swedish company supplied from Sweden and in Turkey under the management, which are being already put together and constructed in Turkey under the direction of Swedish radio engineers.

In his report to the press Mr. de Laval expressed his admiration of the progressive spirit of new Turkey under the present regimen.

The news of this contract, which implies the purveyance of several million dollars' worth of radio material, has been received with the greatest satisfaction by the Swedish public as proof of Turkey's confidence in the Swedish industrial products. The leading Swedish telephone company L. M. Ericson has constructed the telephone system in Angora. Shortly before, however, a Swedish industrial concern had concluded a contract concerning the supply of railway material and the building of a Turkish railroad line.

RIDDLE OF MAN WITH LOST MEMORY

A more mysterious case can rarely have engaged a Poor Law authority than that of Albert Mayfield, whose strange story of how he has twice lost his memory was related in the workhouse infirmary of which he is a patient.

The fact that he seems almost certainly an American and yet was traveling from Siam to London with a British passport partly corroborates the remarkable story that he tells.

If relatives or friends come forward to substantiate his story of how he was struck by a stone 40 years ago in his home town of Rose, near Minneapolis in the State of Minnesota, United States, or how until recently his life before this incident was forgotten, and of how his early part

of his life has now come back and memory has failed on the happenings of the subsequent 40 years, it will be one of the most remarkable cases of loss of memory in medical annals.

He is as confident that his name is Gurney and is as certain of incidents of his boyhood days in America as he was emphatic that his name was Mayfield and that he was a Briton when he was traveling home from Siam. Has he two separate entities which are doomed never to meet?

The workhouse authorities are not troubling him with too many questions at present. He has been provided with a lot of reading matter and advised to take things quietly.

"I have been reading Temple Thurston. How greatly emotion enters into books compared with my boyhood days. I have been studying O'Henry and finding it hard to cope with the great economy of words and of the great compression shown."

As the reporter to whom he was speaking walked down country lanes with him he stopped and stared at every motor-car and omnibus that passed. Although he no longer talks so much about them, he stares after them as people did when the first motorcars appeared on the streets.

Nothing has yet been heard from the Foreign Office regarding the case and no action has yet been taken by the American authorities in London.

ARTICLE TELLS OF POLAND

The Bankers Trust Company of New York is distributing an article by Ivy Lee, who made a tour and study of Eastern and Central Europe in the early months of the year, on "Poland Under Pilsudski."

"The principal factors necessary to an understanding of Poland, by far the largest State created by the World War, may be quickly grasped," the Bankers Trust Company says. "Picture a territory of approximately 150,000 square miles in area, four-fifths the size of Germany and sixth in size in Europe, located virtually in the centre of the Continent, within the bracing climate of the north temperate zone. On the east lies Russia; on the west, Germany; on the north, Lithuania and East Prussia, between which and Germany Poland enjoys an outlet to the sea through the Dantzig corridor. On the south lie Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

"People this territory with 30,000,000 inhabitants, the majority following agricultural pursuits, but with a considerable urban population settled in the cities of Warsaw, Lodz, Katowice, Vilna and other cities, and the picture is complete in its main elements, with one exception. There remains, most important of all, though intangible, the national character. The key to this is unquestionably the long struggle of the Poles for independence and their determination, now that independence has been regained, to achieve an economic development commensurable with the natural resources of the country."

CURRENT NEWS

8-HOUR LAW PLEA WINS GRATITUDE OF CITY FORCES

The joint committee of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association and the Uniformed Firemen's Association sent a vote of thanks to William O'Reilly, of Brooklyn, who has appealed for an eight-hour law for both uniformed forces.

"Policemen and firemen of this city note with deep gratitude your powerful appeal for the eight-hour day in the Police and Fire Departments," the letter said. "Notwithstanding the popular sentiment for the eight-hour bill and the willing sacrifice of 23,000 policemen and firemen in their difficult and perilous work, they have not been able to get a hearing before the Board of Aldermen.

"The eight-hour law will not cost the city a penny, but will add greatly to the efficiency of the two departments and to the contentment of the men and their families. The policemen and firemen have nothing to offer to any Alderman except a good cause supported by labor and public opinion. Please accept the sincere thanks of the policemen and the firemen and their families for the work you are doing in their behalf."

The letter was signed by Joseph P. Moran and Anton Holterback, presidents, respectively, of the patrolmen's and the firemen's associations.

GAINS OF LOWER SOCIAL CLASSES CALLED RACE PERIL

Dr. Ellsworth Huntington, research associate at Yale University, warns against the danger of breeding out the American stock at the top, in an article "Our Biological Future," appearing in the October number of "The Yale Review." The professor is pessimistic as to the outlook, although at many periods of the past, according to Doctor Huntington, the upper classes have had at least as high a birth rate as the lower classes, and a low death rate. They increased more rapidly than the lower classes, and this, the savant concludes, appears to be the only healthful state of society. Today the reverse is true, in his judgment, owing to economic pressure, industrialism, self-expression, feminism, birth control and other causes.

"The upper classes are rapidly dying out; the lower classes are rapidly increasing," Doctor Huntington asserts. "That is the great fundamental fact on which the eyes of eugenists have been focused for a generation or two, and which the public is at last beginning to understand.

"Some say that the difference between the birth rates of the upper and lower classes portends a great and speedy disaster to civilization. Others hold that the present conditions are not dangerous because the growth of modern industry demands a constantly increasing percentage of people who are little more than machines. This is flatly contradicted by facts.

"The first is that almost any employer will tell you he has far less trouble in filling a score of positions at the bottom of the ladder than in filling one near the top. The second is that as soon as the United States ceased importing cheap labor in vast quantities, the brainier people went

to work to devise new methods, so that the average efficiency per laborer has increased by leaps and bounds since 1915.

"Many industries now report somewhere near 50 per cent greater production per man than before the war. In other words, what we need is not more brawn, but more brain."

Some persons believe a new upper class, as good as the old, is constantly being built up by recruits from the lower classes, Doctor Huntington adds. Such persons declare this is the great merit of the democratic organizations of our society.

STABBER CUTS GIRL AS 23d VICTIM IN BRIDGEPORT

The stabber who has terrorized Bridgeport for the last thirty months recently appeared and claimed his twenty-third victim in a crowded down-town department store. The victim was Isabelle Pelskur, fourteen, 539 Main Street, messenger girl employed in the D. M. Read Store. The girl was stabbed in the store where she is employed.

The stabbing occurred at 4:50, just two minutes before closing time at the store. Already some of the store doors had been locked and the large crowd of shoppers were being ushered from the store. The employees were leaving their counters and the victim had started up the stairs from the arcade side of the first floor to the women's dressing room.

The girl had scarcely ascended more than half a dozen steps when she was attacked by the assailant, who plunged his sharp blade in the side, causing a severe wound.

The emergency hospital ambulance was called and the victim was treated by Dr. Sydney Mooney in the first aid room of the department store. After treatment the girl was taken to her home, where she is recovering.

The stabber's appearance was the third since August 23. Only two of these stabbings, however, have been reported to the police. All three appearances of the stabber have occurred in the daytime, and although the police have redoubled their vigilance no trace of the stabber has been found.

Detectives rushed to the store as soon as the stabbing was reported. They obtained a meager description of her assailant from the victim. Detectives were detailed about the central shopping district.

After a lapse in activities of six months the stabber appeared on August 23 and stabbed Selma Ginsberg, sixteen years old, of 75 Columbia Street, a summer school student. The girl was on her way to school when stabbed by the man in the center of the city. Two days later another day stabbing occurred, but this was never reported to the police. The other victims have been at intervals over a period of thirty months. The stabber's first appearance was on February 20, 1925, when he stabbed Mary Anbunzia at the entrance to the library.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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